

**COMPETENCES, SKILLS, LEARNING SOURCES AND THE
SUPPORT NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WHO PURCHASE SMALL
ESTABLISHED ENTERPRISES**

By

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Individuals Who Purchase Small Established Enterprises**

Abstract

Although a significant number of small firms are purchased as going-concerns¹ these businesses are rarely studied as a separate sub-group. The research conducted here therefore focuses on small businesses that were purchased as established enterprises, namely the skills and competences that are required to operate them successfully. The study also looks to identify the learning and knowledge sources that are the most beneficial to the Owner-Managers of these firms and determine how their needs might best be supported.

The study concerns small firms that are located in the South West of England (Torbay and South Hams) and comprises quantitative and qualitative research that is presented in three Phases. Phase 1 which comprises a postal questionnaire administered to a sample of 350 small business purchasers is used to (1) test a number of propositions and (2) identify issues that require further examination. Extensive use is therefore made of Chi-square, one-way analysis of variance and multivariate analysis of variance.

The results generated by the questionnaire revealed a number of areas that required further examination, namely the reasons for training abstention; the role played by informal training; key sources of learning; the type of support that is most needed and whether skill prioritisation is linked to small firm ownership within this context.

These issues form the basis of Phase 2 of the research, which comprises face-to face interviews held with a number of accountants (n=10), who could provide information concerning small firms from a professional and therefore different perspective

However in order to fulfil the research objectives further research was required. Phase 3 of the research therefore comprises face-to-face interviews held with a cross-section of the OMs surveyed.

Although the results generated by these two phases of the research show that there are no skills that are particular to this sub-sector, skill prioritisation is significantly influenced by ownership in this context. Whilst the most popular forms of skill development are informal training and experiential learning, working alongside the present owner(s) prior to taking over the business is the richest source of learning.

Given that the research (1) shows that those who purchase established enterprises prioritise skills in a particular way (2) identifies a particular form of learning that takes place when time is spent working alongside the present owner(s) (3) establishes a need for specialist support and (4) proposes a framework, which can be used to formulate learning plans, the study therefore makes a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge on small firms.

¹going-concern within the context of this study being defined as '*a business, which is currently trading in a manner in which the purchaser wishes to continue*' (Fuller, 1987),

Contents

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Small Firms in the economy	3
1.2. The Need for Specialist Advice and Support	5
1.3. Identification of a Research Gap	7
1.4. Research Aims and Objectives	7
1.5. Contributions to Existing Research	8
 CHAPTER 2: SKILLS COMPETENCES AND LEARNING STRATEGIES, A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	
2.1. Introduction	11
2.2. Personality Characteristics of the Small Business Owner-Manager	12
2.3. The Entrepreneurial Personality	18
2.4. Motives for Self-employment	22
 2.5. The Problems Facing Small Firms	23
2.6. The Managerial Characteristics of Small Firms	25
2.7. Managerial Competences in Small Firms	28
2.8. Leadership Succession	30
 2.9. Success and Performance Measurement	33
2.10. Summary	37
 CHAPTER 3: SUPPORT AND TRAINING PROVISION, A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	
3.1. Introduction	39
3.2. Establishing and Addressing the Training Needs of Small Firms	39
3.3. Management Development	45
3.4. Informal Training	51
3.5. Tacit Skills	55
3.6. The Strengths and Weaknesses Inherent Within Informal Training	57
3.7. The Relationship Between Training and Learning	58
3.8. Entrepreneurial Learning	60
3.9. The Impact of OM Learning on Small Firm Performance	65
3.10. Sources of Support and Training Provision	66
3.11. The Role of Accountants as Support Providers	78
3.12. Help for Small Firms Via the Internet	79
3.13. The Effectiveness of Training Provision	81
3.14. The Low Market Penetration of Public Sector Support Provision An Overview of Contributory Factors	90

3.15. A Critique of the Literature	92
3.16. The Key Issues that Emerge from the Literature	95
3.17. Research Aims and Objectives	96

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

4.1. Introduction	98
4.2. Positivism	98
4.3. Phenomenology	103
4.4. Epistemological Considerations	106
4.5. Methodological Pluralism	107
4.6. Criticisms of Small Business Research	108
4.7. The Research Philosophies Adopted By This Study	111
4.8. The Prevalence of Survey-Based Research	112
4.9. Selecting the Appropriate Research Methods	117
4.10. Induction and Deduction	120
4.11. Selecting a Sample for The Survey	121
4.11.i. The Sampling Procedure	121
4.11.ii. Selecting a Sample for This Study	123
4.12. Questionnaire Design	126
4.13. Piloting the Questionnaire	132
4.14. The Accountants Interviews (Phase 2 of the Research)	137
4.15. Selecting an Appropriate Method of Data Collection (qualitative)	137
4.16. Selecting a Sample for the Interviews	140
4.17. Selecting a Sample of Professionals	140
4.18. Interview Plan and Content	143
4.19. Ethical Considerations	145
4.20. Summary	146

CHAPTER 5: PHASE 1 RESULTS

5.1 Introduction	148
5.2 Examining Relationships Through Cross-tabulation	151
5.3 Examining Between-Group Differences Using MANOVA & ANOVA	151
5.4 General Findings	152
5.4.i The Business	152
5.4.ii Personal Details	153
5.4.iii. Education and Training	154
5.4.iv. Business Performance and Perceptions of Success	156
5.4.v. Skill Prioritisation	157
5.4.vi. Skill Levels	159
5.5. The Results Yielded by the Tests Used to Compare Groups	160

5.5.i. Training uptake	161
5.5.ii. Skill Prioritisation	167
5.5.iii.OMs Perceptions of Their Skill Levels	171
5.6. Skill Prioritisation: a Comparison of the Results Generated by the Two Questionnaires	172
5.7. Summary	173

CHAPTER 6: PHASE 2, QUALITATIVE RESULTS

6.1. Introduction	176
6.2. Interview Analysis	177
6.3. The Interview Results	178
6.3.i. Introduction	178
6.4. The Problems Experienced by Small Firms	179
6.5. Comparing the Differences Between Start-ups and Firms That are Purchased as Going-Concerns	181
6.6. The Skills Required for Successful Small Business Ownership	183
6.7. Common Skill Gaps and Areas of Incompetence	185
6.8. Methods of Training	188
6.9. Support Provision	191
6.10. The Role of Accountants as Personal Business Advisors	192
6.11. Ownership Context and Success	194
6.12. Summary	195
6.13. Comparing Quantitative and Qualitative Results	195
6.14. The need for Additional research	196

CHAPTER 7: PHASE 3 RESULTS: THE FOLLOW-UP (OM) INTERVIEWS

7.1. Introduction	198
7.2. Interview Analysis	199
7.3. The Research Findings	201
7.3.i. The Purchase of the Business	201
7.3.ii. Inheriting Employees	203
7.3.iii. Skill Prioritisation	204
7.3.iv. Planning	209
7.3.v. The Most Frequently Used Source of Advice	210
7.3.vi. Other Sources of Advice	211
7.3.vii. Public Sector Support	213
7.3.viii. Specialist Support and Training	214
7.3.ix. Formal Training	217
7.3.x. Formal Training Abstention	219
7.3.xi. Informal Training	220

7.3.xii. Working Alongside the Present Owners	222
7.3.xiii. The Most Effective Single Source of Learning	224
7.3.xiv. Measuring Success	225
7.4 Summary	226
7.5. The OM Interviews and the Accountants' Interviews: A Comparison of Findings	227

CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS AND FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT

8.1. Introduction	229
8.2. Discussion of the Research Propositions	229
8.3. The Take-up of Formal Training	237
8.3.i. An Emphasis on Technical Training	238
8.3.ii. The Employment of Informal Training/Learning Strategies	239
8.3.iii. Alternative Learning Sources	240
8.3.iv. Financial constraints	240
8.3.v. Time Shortage	240
8.4. Training Needs	241
8.5. Preferred Styles of Training Delivery	243
8.6. The Take-Up of Support Provision	245
8.7. Informal training and learning	249
8.8. The Questionable Relationship Between Training and Business Performance	250
8.9. The Weak Link Between Financial Performance and Perceptions of Success	254
8.10. Key Sources of Learning	255
8.11. Situational Learning	257
8.12. The Popularity of Accountants and Their Role as Business Advisors	260
8.13. Business Advisors and Mentoring	262
8.14. The Creation of Flexible Learning Strategies	263
8.15. Construction of the Framework	265
8.16. The Structure of the Framework, (Boxes 1-14)	268
8.17. An Interactive Framework to Assist Support Providers	272

CHAPTER 9: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

9.1. Summary of the Research	274
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9.2. Restrictions and Limitations Within the Research	276
9.2.i. The Bias Imposed by Geographical Location	276
9.2.ii. Gender Bias	277
9.2.iii. Interview Bias	278
9.2.iv. The Sample Size (Quantitative research)	278
9.2.v. Tests of Significance	279
9.2.vi. Key Learning Events and Activities	279
9.2.vii. The Inheritance of Staff	280
9.2.viii. Working Alongside Family Members	280
9.2.ix. The Impact of Formal Training	280
9.3. Areas for Further Research	281
9.3.i. Introduction	281
9.3.ii. Geographical Location	281
9.3.iii. Informal Training and Learning Activities	281
9.3.iv. The Impact of Formal Training	282
9.3.v. Inheriting Staff	282
9.3.vi. Family Businesses	283
9.3.vii. Validation of the Learning Framework	283
9.3.viii. The Need for Longitudinal/Qualitative Research	283
9.4. How the Research contributes to the Existing Body of Knowledge	284
9.5. The Value of the Research	286

APPENDICES

Owner-Manager Questionnaire	A1
Test Matrix (Statistics)	A19
Statistical Analyses (SPSS output)	A20
Accountants' Interview Question Matrix	A201
Interviewee Matrix	A214
Owner-Manager Interview Question Matrix	A215
Owner-Manager Interview Transcript (example)	A230

BIBLIOGRAPHY	B1
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Tables and Figures

Tables

Table 1.1.	The Small Business Fraternity: disaggregating ownership context	3
Table 2.1.	The seven key characteristics associated with successful entrepreneurs	18
Table 2.2.	A review of psychological investigations comparing high-growth and normal growth entrepreneurs (in alphabetical order)	20
Table 2.3.	Four assumptions of homogeneity that typically lead to misunderstandings about small firms	26
Table 3.1.	The key gaps that exist amongst support and training Initiatives for start-ups	41
Table 3.2.	Distinguishing features of lower and higher-level learning	64
Table 3.3.	The Key Restraints that hinder the Efficiency of Small Firm Support Provision	81
Table 4.1.	Treatments Increasing and Not Increasing Response rates in Mail Surveys of Business Populations Based on Literature Reviews and Meta-Analyses	115
Table 4.2.	The skills that the OM were asked to rate (Questionnaire #2)	129
Table 4.3.	The skills that respondents were asked to rate for inclusion on OM training programmes (Questionnaire#1)	130
Table 4.4.	The different types of data obtained by quantitative and qualitative research methods	138
Table 4.5.	The key issues examined during the accountants Interviews	143

Table 5.1.	The way skills were rated for inclusion on OM training programmes designed for those who purchase established enterprises	157
Table 5.2.	The prioritisation of skills for successful ownership of a business that was purchased as an established enterprise	158
Table 5.3.	The OM's personal perceptions of their current skill levels	159
Table 5.4.	Test results for significant associations between previous occupations and business type	161
Table 5.5.	Descriptives	161
Table 5.6.	Ranks	162
Table 5.7.	Ranks	163
Table 5.8.	Results from tests used to determine significant associations between training uptake, attitudes towards future training and ownership status	163
Table 5.9.	The results from tests used to determine significant associations between training uptake, attitudes towards future training and the presence of employees	164
Table 5.10.	Significant associations between the take up of training, attitudes towards future training and the presence of employees	164
Table 5.11.	Results from the tests used to determine significant associations between training uptake, attitudes towards future training and previous ownership of a business	165
Table 5.12.	Results from tests used to determine significant associations between training uptake, attitudes towards future training and academic status	165
Table 5.13.	The results from tests used to determine significant associations between training uptake and previous occupation	166
Table 5.14.	The results from tests used to determine significant associations between attitudes towards future training and previous occupation	166
Table 5.15.	Test results for significant associations between	

	movements in sales, perceptions of the firms success and training uptake	166
Table 5.16.	Significant associations between movements in sales levels, perceptions of the firm's success and the uptake of training	167
Table 5.17.	Results from tests used to determine significant associations between business type and the way skills are prioritized for successful small business ownership	168
Table 5.18.	Significant associations between the key skills required for successful business ownership and business type	168
Table 5.19.	Results from tests used to determine significant associations between the key skills required for successful business ownership and the length of time the business has been owned	169
Table 5.20.	Results for tests to determine significant associations between skill ratings for successful small business ownership and previous ownership of a business	169
Table 5.22.	Results from tests to determine significant associations between skill ratings for inclusion on OM training programmes and business type	170
Table 5.23.	Results from tests used to determine significant associations between skill ratings for inclusion on OM training programmes and previous ownership of a small business	170
Table 5.24.	Significant associations between the length of time the business has been owned and skill ratings for inclusion on OM training programmes	171
Table 5.25.	Test results for significant associations between perceptions of skill levels and previous ownership of a small firm	171
Table 5.26.	Test results for significant associations between perceptions of skill levels and the length of time the business has been owned	172
Table 5.27.	Comparing the prioritisation of skills for OM training programmes (Questionnaire 1) with the prioritisation of skills for OM training programmes (Questionnaire 2)	173

Table 8.1.	The prime causes of the low uptake of public agency support	245
Table 8.2.	The preferences, dislikes and burdens that influence the way purchasers of established enterprises learn	264
Table 8.3.	The key benefits afforded by working alongside the present owners ('induction training')	269
Table 9.1.	Research Objectives	274
Table 9.2.	Research Propositions	275
Table 9.3.	Threats to external validity	277

Figures

Figure 4.1.	The most frequently used sources of business advice	141
Figure 5.1.	The OM's previous occupation	154
Figure 5.2.	The most frequently used source of advice	156
Figure 8.1.	A Framework for the creation of strategies that encourage skill development and ongoing learning	266
Figure 8.2.	Specialist Support for Small Business Purchasers: An Interactive Framework for the development of OM skills and Competences	267
Figure 8.3.	The key learning events that comprise the 'multi-method context specific' form of learning that occurs during the period spent working alongside the present owners	270

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The reason for undertaking this research stemmed mainly from a Masters dissertation that examined the effectiveness of OM NVQs. Conversations that took place after the participants (small firm owners) had been interviewed revealed that there is very little training and support available for those who purchase established businesses. A brief review of the existing literature on small firms also showed that there is very little documentation concerning this sub-sector of the small business fraternity.

The objective of the study was therefore to examine the key skills and competences that are required to operate businesses that were purchased as going-concerns and establish which learning and knowledge sources are the most beneficial. The study also looked to determine the particular needs of those who operate these firms and how their needs might best be supported.

Having identified a potential area for research, advice and assistance was required from number of sources in order to construct and present the project. When looking to acknowledge the people to whom so much is owed, it is therefore difficult to know where to begin.

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Authors Declaration

At no during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award without prior agreement of the Graduate Committee.

The study was entirely self-funded and carries out in collaboration with Plymouth Business School.

Prior to enrolment for this award a post graduate (Master of Science) course was taken in Social Scientific Research.

Various conferences/presentations were attended for the purpose of gathering information relevant to the research and a number of visits/telephone phone calls were made to external institutions (e.g. Business Link and Lloyds Bank)who were consulted on issues relating to small firms.

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Terminology: Context and Definition

Learning

Although it is difficult to define the concept of learning, there are a significant number of academics who support the view that:

'Learning is a longer term change in the knowledge possessed by an individual, the type and level of skill, or their assumptions, attitudes or values, which may lead to them having increased potential to grow, develop and perform in more satisfying and effective ways.'
(Sadler-Smith 2006:4)

This definition is important as it embraces skills and knowledge, which suggests that learning is only achieved when it becomes embodied in behaviour or the intent to behave (Forman, 1980). This particular concept also supports the argument that transference of learning occurs whenever previous learning, knowledge and skills influence the way new skills and knowledge are learned and utilised (Cormier & Hagman, 1987). Learning therefore begins from what the learner already knows and not what the teacher attempts to impart (Gibb, 1997).

However learning covers a variety of perspectives ranging from the process of gaining knowledge and expertise (Knowles et al., 1998) to training, where the systematic acquisition of skills, rules, concepts and attitudes ... *result in improved performance in another environment ...* (Goldstein, 1993: 14).

Consequently researchers are able to examine the learning process from a number of standpoints. For example Storey (1994) and Gibb (1997) have examined the role of formal training and what small firm owners are likely to learn from it. By contrast Gooderham et al., (2004) have examined the way OM's learn from their accountants and how the knowledge that has been acquired from this particular source is transferred to the workplace. However Antonacopoulou (1999, 2001) examines learning from a much broader perspective, where training is perceived as one of many potential learning sources. She also draws attention to the fact that training may not always result in learning, which

highlights the importance of examining the learning process from more than one standpoint.

The research conducted here explores a variety of learning sources that may be utilised by those taking over established enterprises. This particular function is therefore perceived as any activity that has the capacity to influence behaviour in the manner(s) described previously. As different individuals exposed to the same learning environment will achieve different levels of skill (depending on their motivations, academic status, learning skills and aptitudes), this particular factor is therefore taken into consideration when looking to construct a framework that will assist skill development and ongoing learning amongst those who have purchased established enterprises.

Knowledge

The concept of knowledge may be divided into two basic categories: *tacit knowledge*, which is the knowledge gained experientially and therefore difficult to codify, replicate and transmit and *explicit knowledge* which is based on facts and theories that can be codified, replicated and transmitted to others (Grant, 1996; Berman et al., 2002).

However Polanyi (1967) argued that ‘...there is no scientific method that can be transmitted as a logical and rigorous method to be learned in textbooks ...’ (Nye, 2002). A great deal of knowledge is acquired through practical experience, which is transmitted from expert to novice through demonstration and imitation. This form of knowledge therefore cannot be conveyed via the spoken word. Consequently managing tacit knowledge for the purpose of facilitating learning is difficult. To help resolve this problem (Grant, 2000) identifies three separate issues that need be addressed. Firstly the degree of the tacitness of the knowledge needs to be determined, as this varies from task to task. However where the knowledge is dependent on the unique skills and experiences of an individual this may be impossible to codify, unlike explicit knowledge, which can be used to formulate specific management structures. This type of knowledge is therefore transmitted through non-verbal means. Secondly there is the question of context, which needs to be appropriate as this particular form of knowledge can only be transmitted through practical methods (i.e. expert-novice). Finally there is the question of integration,

which is based on the combination of different knowledge types, without the cost of experts having to learn from each other (Sadler, 2001).

The acquisition of knowledge has been examined from a variety of perspectives. For example, O'Neill, (1990), Storey & Westhead (1994) and Devins & Johnson (2003), have examined explicit knowledge, which is transmitted through contact with others who have such knowledge to impart. By contrast research conducted by Nonaka (1994) and Deakins & Friel (1998) examines the way knowledge may be acquired through personal experience. The focus in this instance is therefore on tacit knowledge. There are however studies that examine both types of knowledge, including research conducted by Chrisman & McMullan (2004), which examines the way outsider assistance, enables OM's to acquire explicit and tacit knowledge.

Given that the research conducted here examines a wide range of knowledge sources that purchasers of established enterprises might exploit, the study focuses on the acquisition of tacit and explicit knowledge. However particular attention is paid to the knowledge that may be acquired through practical experience (experiential learning) and the knowledge that may be acquired through the advice provided by others (e.g. accountants and support networks).

Competences

One of the most comprehensive definitions of competence comes from Sadler-Smith (2006) who with recourse to Boyatzis (1982) suggests that competence is '*... an underlying characteristic of a person which can be a motive, trait, skill, aspect of ones self image or social role or a body of knowledge that the individual uses*' (p.259).

Similarly Martin & Staines (1994) argue that OM competences are not merely set of specified skills that increase an individuals ability to manage a small business efficiently, but a wide range of characteristics that are associated with effective management and leadership. This particular concept therefore includes knowledge, skills and personal qualities. Making the distinction between 'competency' and 'competence' Woodruffe (1993) suggests that competency may be conceptualised as the dimensions of behaviour that underlie competent job performance. He therefore argues that this particular term

should be used only in conjunction with person-orientated variables that people bring with them to the job (i.e. their inputs).

By contrast it has been suggested that the term 'competence' should be used to describe the task-orientated outcomes that are associated with effective managerial performance. A further contribution provided by Mole et al., (1993) sets out a specific framework for identifying the problems of researching into competence in terms of different focuses, identification and assessment. The concept of competence is therefore divided into three specific concepts; inputs, process and outcomes.

However each approach is often criticised from the standpoint of the other. For example the inputs approach which rests on the identification of personal qualities and/or the knowledge required to perform managerial tasks, tends to assume that a universal set of skills, traits and behaviours are relevant to most managerial work regardless of the context. Those who are sceptical of this particular standpoint therefore find it difficult to accept that possessing a wide range of qualities and/or an understanding of the principles of management guarantees effective performance. By contrast those who favour the processes approach which examines what managers actually do, find it difficult to demonstrate a relationship between the complex, fragmented activities that managers undertake and their degree of effectiveness (Hales, 1986). The outcomes approach which focuses on what managers achieve is criticised mainly because of its tendency to focus on the identification of universal competences, which may be irrelevant to the management tasks that cannot be standardised in this way (Whitley, 1989; Storey, 1994). This point is further underscored by the fact that businesses are often subject to rapid change, much of which is contextual in nature (Whitley, 1989; Storey, 1994).

Looking at the definition of competence in regards to manager and management Currie & Darby (1995), reflect the arguments put forward by Martin & Staines (1994) who claim that it is inappropriate to infer that managerial skills are generic in nature. The basis of this argument stems from the way that professional tasks differ from one organisation to another. This viewpoint also underscores the argument put forward by Whitley, (1989) and Storey (1994) who suggest that competences are largely context specific. Given that

the 'softer' skills such as 'sensitivity' and creativity are particularly difficult to define, assessing the degree of competence within these areas is therefore extremely difficult.

The NVQ system of training is designed to focus on gaining competence through experiential learning (Bryan, 1995). Designed to show that an individual is competent in a particular job, individuals are required to provide evidence that they are able to perform a specific task (<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/nvq>). However this form of skill development is often criticised for its generic format (Rankin, 1995), which some organisations find restricting. Significantly OM NVQs have also been considered inappropriate because of the rigidity of the framework (Hillier, 1995). Given also that the national standards that are produced by competence-based analysis are often generic rather than company-specific, it has been suggested that NVQs might be more beneficial if they were used to create a flexible framework for the construction of company-specific standards (Sadler-Smith, 2006).

For the purpose of this study the term competence is a combination of the three concepts put forward by Mole et al (1993) (p.*). This is because the research examines not only the management characteristics that are often described as universal but also the skills, knowledge and personal experiences that individuals use to enhance their competence as managers.

Skills

The various types of skill can be divided into several categories. For example Sadler-Smith (2006) suggests that there are intellectual skills; manual and psychomotor skills and social and interpersonal skills, although each may contain elements of the other.

Bramley (1996) also suggests there are four basic levels of skill:

The basic level, which demonstrates an ability to identify specific components

The second level, which demonstrates an ability to perform simple procedures (possibly with the help of written instructions or notes)

The third level which involves performing skilled actions and often requires considerable practice and

The highest level of skill, which demonstrates an individual's ability to judge whether a piece of work is acceptable. However assessment at this level can be difficult, as the testing situation requires the individual to make correct decisions on a number of issues.

With regards to manual tasks these varying skill levels are relatively simple to identify, as physical evidence provides proof of progress. However social and interpersonal skills may be difficult to assess, as they are often hard to define (Sadler-Smith, 2006). One aspect of skills that makes them easier to conceptualise are the various levels of skill that can be identified as the proficiency of the individual increases. With regards to OM support and training, this particular factor tends to illustrate the benefits that may be afforded by appointing mentors and/or personal business advisors who are not only able to identify skill gaps and shortfalls, but also assess the progress of an individual as their skills develop and improve.

As with knowledge, skills have tacit and explicit dimensions. Tacit skills are often regarded as being partly referential (i.e. referenced to context) as people take existing skills and abilities with them to new jobs (Evans et al., 2004). However it cannot be assumed that the key skills gained from one environment will automatically fit into another, as it is the whole systems that count (Engestrom, 1994, 2001). OMs of small firms who have experience within the same industry as their business cannot therefore be guaranteed success.

With regards to OM skills, Gray & Thomson (1999) tend to view these as a range of specific abilities within clearly defined areas. They therefore argue that whilst the ability to manage the company's finances is a skill, knowing how to raise finance and process information is not, as these are not specific tasks that require a certain level of skill. Accepting that there are many dimensions to the effective management of small firms and that an individual's ability to manage the business is dependent on a wide range of factors, it is nevertheless possible to identify a number of universal skills that are considered essential to small business management (Martin & Staines, 1994).

In the context of this study skills may be described as a wide range of specific attributes that help form the basis of effective small business management.

Support

The concept of support in relation to the provision of advice and assistance to small firms is fairly universal, as it generally refers to individuals and/or organisations that provide these facilities to SMEs.

However some researchers focus on government sponsored initiatives and other public sector support services (e.g. Boocock et al., 1998; Curran & Blackburn, 2000) whilst others concentrate on the services that are available via the private sector (e.g. Kirby & King, 1997; Gooderham et al. 2004).

Support may also refer to a professional service or services provided by an individual or a company such as accountants, who in addition to the provision of a specific service also offer general business advice to SMEs (Gooderham et al., 2004). Although there are many different types of support and assistance available, the overall objective of these providers are clearly very similar, namely to provide a service that is designed to help small business OM's cope with the various issues/problems they are likely to face (DTI, 2007). As the definition of small business support tends to depend on the nature of the study and the intentions of the researcher, support in the context of this study refers to the wide range of facilities that are available to small firm owners and includes public and private sector providers.

Training

Sadler-Smith (2006) suggests that training is a technical approach to the gaining of specific knowledge and skills. By contrast Goldstein (1993) adopts a much broader stance where training also includes the acquisition of concepts and attitudes that result in improved performance within '*... another environment...*' (p.3). Noting the difference between education and training some writers view training as a mechanistic process (Buckley & Caple, 1992) whilst education (generally) is more organic. This is reflected in the way education is largely unpredictable whereas training tends to be very specific with predictable outcomes. However it is often argued that training alone should not be regarded

as the mainstay of skill development as the concept is too narrow (Curran et al., 1995; Sadler-Smith, 2006). Moreover this particular perspective also ignores learning processes and '*... the incidental, informal and implicit learning that is inevitable in any organisational or social context*' (p6). Despite the relationship that exists between training and learning, training *per se* cannot be considered a panacea for knowledge and skill deficiency.

Looking to encompass a broad spectrum of activities that may be regarded as training Storey (1994) identifies three specific approaches:

A process of self-development that follows an informal and unstructured way of learning

A structured process, administered by some central agency through which all must pass to achieve accreditation and

An intermediary process where the self-development process is supported by '*organisationally provided mechanisms*' (p.370) that form strategies for activities such as action learning, coaching, mentoring and networking.

The subject of training may therefore be examined from a number of different perspectives. For example O'Neill (1990) has examined OM training in the formal context, his main objective being to establish how skills may be developed within specific key areas through structured learning programmes. By contrast the Small Business Administrate (SBA) (1985) perceived training as ongoing and continuous where an individuals skills are constantly developed and improved in line with the ever-changing nature of the business world. However by adopting a much broader perspective Thomson & Gray (1999) were able to identify a wide range of activities that enable OM's to develop within their roles.

In the context of this study training may be defined as any activity that aims to develop OM skills and competences. The focus is therefore on formal and informal training. However the research adopts the standpoint that whilst training has very specific

objectives, there is no guarantee that it will result in learning (Antonacopoulou, 1999, 2001).

Success

Comparatively little research has been conducted into the conflicting measures between OM's personal goals and the financial requirement of operating a successful business (e.g. Walker & Brown, 2004; Haber & Reichel, 2005). Success within the context of small business ownership tends therefore to focus on financial criteria with limited attention being paid to the achievement of personal goals (Walker & Brown, 2004).

Consequently the majority of studies that examine business success rely on traditional measures, which are based either on employee numbers or financial performance, (i.e. turnover, profit or return on investment) (Kalleberg & Leicht, 1991; Barkham et al., 1996; Gray, 1998; Forsaith & Hall, 2000). However these measures tend to assume that OM's are interested in growth, which is often not the case (Watson, 1995; More Than Business, 2005). In firms that have no desire to grow the success of the firm may therefore be measured against non-financial factors such as personal satisfaction and flexibility (Walker & Brown, 2004; Haber & Reichel, 2005). Significantly Huang and Brown discovered that because a business and its owner are strongly interlinked, personal success often equates to business success.

The research conducted here therefore acknowledges that those who purchase established enterprises are likely to measure success in a number of different ways. Attempts are therefore made to establish how the OM's measure success and which factors are the most influential.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

There are currently a large number of support providers in the UK that offer assistance to small and medium enterprises (SME's). Although these providers claim they are able to accommodate all such firms, most of the facilities on offer are geared towards start-ups (Priest, 1997; Curran & Blackburn, 2000) and firms that have growth potential (DTI, 1994; 1998; Boocock et al., 1998; DfEE, 2000; CEML, 2002; Roper & Hart, 2003). Similarly most of the government incentives that aim to assist the self-employed focus on the creation of new businesses and therefore often exclude Owner-Managers (OMs) of established firms (Hussey, 2005). As it is likely that many of these firms are purchased as going concerns it is significant that there is no specialist support available to this sub-sector even though a large number of these OMs may be new to small business ownership.

A review of the literature on small firms provides further evidence that firms that have changed owners through sale and purchase have not been researched as a separate subsector. The fact that this particular sub-sector has received such little attention is clearly significant, as the SME fraternity is likely to contain a large number of these businesses. Although leadership succession within established firms is well documented, the effect that a change of ownership may have on a firm is not, even though the difficulties that face these two groups may be very similar. The reason why firms that were purchased as going-concerns have received such little attention is therefore brought into question.

One reason that might help to account for the lack of research in this area is the failure to disaggregate ownership context. More consideration should therefore be given to this factor, as it is likely to have a significant influence on a number of issues, including the way skills are prioritised and support needs. For example those who purchase established enterprises are likely to have very different support and training needs from those embarking on new ventures. Although it is continually acknowledged that the small business fraternity comprises an intricate mix of unique and specific groups (Martin & Staines, 1994; DTI, 1999a) there is very little data concerning small businesses that were purchased as going-concerns and/or the impact of ownership context. Similarly much of the research that focuses on established firms rarely distinguishes between founder member owned firms and firms that were purchased as going-concerns. The fact that a significant number of those who purchase established enterprises may be new to small business ownership provides just one reason why these two groups might need to be considered separately.

Clearly, where the research concerns one specific sub-sector (e.g. new ventures), information pertaining to established firms, including those that were acquired as going-concerns, may not be required. However in instances where the research focuses on the small business fraternity as a whole it might be advantageous to disaggregate ownership context, as it would then be possible to determine whether there are any significant differences between the various groups.

Having established the significance of ownership context, Table 1.1 proposes an example of how firms might be disaggregated in this way.

Status	Context of Ownership
Business Start-ups	new, inexperienced owner
Business Start-ups	experienced owner; familiar with small firm ownership
Established businesses	experienced (founder) owner
Family run businesses (usually well-established)	experienced owner(s)
Small businesses purchased as going-concerns	inexperienced owner, new to small firm ownership
Small businesses purchased as going-concerns	experienced owner, familiar with small firm ownership

Table 1.1: The Small Business Fraternity: disaggregating ownership context

Given that it has been shown that mature firms and start-ups prioritise and apply key skills in different ways (Schuler & Jackson, 1987) it is therefore proposed that firms which have been purchased as going concerns will also prioritise and apply skills in a particular way, as they are likely to be more mature. Given also that many of the problems facing small firms change as different growth phases are entered (Terpstra & Olson, 1993; Martin & Staines, 1994; Huang & Brown, 1999) the skills and competences required to address these issues are likely to change accordingly. This clearly implies that owning and managing a business that was purchased as a going-concern is very different from launching a new venture.

1.1. Small Firms and the Economy

As it is likely that a significant number of small firms are purchased as established enterprises (Donnelly, 1981) this particular sub-sector along with other small firms evidently has much to contribute towards economic growth and prosperity in the UK (Harrison 1994; Curran, 2000; Westhead et al., 2001; Mandl, 2004; Henry et al., 2004).

For example at the beginning of 2005 there were an estimated 4.3 million businesses in the UK; an increase of 1.4% on the start of 2004 (Interdepartmental Business Register [IDBR], 2005). Significantly 99.3% were small businesses (0-49 employees) 0.6% were medium sized companies (50-245 employees) and 0.1% were large firms (250+ employees). Figures provided by the IDBR also suggest that the firms which employ 49 people or less account for 46% of employment and 36% of turnover.

The large number of small firms in existence is also reflected in bank loan and overdraft allocation, which in 2004 totalled approximately £37 billion (Dooks, 2004). However, as the figures are not disaggregated the number of loans/overdrafts allocated to the various sub-sectors (new enterprises, established firms, business purchases etc.) cannot be determined. This is largely due to the fact that unless this type of data is required for a specific purpose such information is rarely available to the public (McDowell, 2004). However in 2000, Lloyds TSB produced a breakdown of their loan allocation for research purposes. The figures suggested that out of the £323 million allocated to small firms, £90 million was for the purchase of going-concerns. The fact that the majority of small business loans are taken out by those embarking upon new ventures (Lloyds Bank 2000) helps to explain why start-ups are often the main priority. It is nevertheless significant that lending institutions rarely provide incentives (e.g. special overdraft facilities and free banking) for individuals who purchase an established enterprise even though there are clearly a large number of individuals who may wish to raise capital for this purpose.

In response to the growing number of SME's numerous policies have been adopted which highlight the pivotal role small firms play in furthering economic prosperity (Laukkanen, 2000; Westhead et al., 2001; Henry et al., 2004: Small Business Service

[SBS] 2006), These policies include the introduction of various government initiatives and public support networks, the number of which currently totals over 200 (Curran and Blackburn, 2000). To help OM's develop the appropriate skills, many of these schemes also provide management training: a concept which evolved from previous perceptions of Britain's national training policy which was often viewed as being biased against the interests of smaller enterprises (Bolton, 1971; Abbott, 1993; Curran et al., 1995).

Despite the introduction of these various networks, failure rates amongst small firms remain high, particularly in regards to start-ups who are especially vulnerable during the first three years (Storey, 1993; Cressey & Storey, 1995). Although there is very little documentation concerning firms that have been purchased as going-concerns twenty years ago Fuller (1987) established that approximately two out of every five shops that were sold came back on to the market within two years. Acknowledging that this information might be considered outdated the figures are nevertheless significant, as they provide an indication of the vulnerability of businesses that are purchased as going concerns.

1.2. The Need for Specialist Advice and Support

Although there is clearly a great deal of advice and assistance available to SMEs, OM's often find it difficult to obtain the appropriate support and training. Accepting that there may be several reasons for this, it has nevertheless been argued that the situation would significantly improve if more attention was paid to the feedback provided by small firm owners (Curran & Blackburn, 2000;). Although the heterogeneous nature of small firms makes it difficult to provide facilities that have the potential to benefit everyone (DTI, 1999a), much of the current support and training available is still considered generally

unsuitable (Curran et al., 1995; Thomson & Gray, 1999; Curran & Blackburn, 2000; Confederation of British Industry, 2005). Moreover the tendency of support providers to focus on start-ups (Curran et al., 1995; Priest, 1997; Blackburn et al., 1999; Curran & Blackburn, 2000) means that established firms are often underserved (Storey, 1994; Curran et al., 2000; Hussey, 2005). Even though this particular sub-sector includes businesses that have changed owners through sale and purchase these networks appear to be unaware of the potential problems facing new owners even though a significant number of these people may be new to small firm ownership. As the majority of government-sponsored initiatives also exclude OM's of established enterprises (Weller, 1999) purchasers of going-concerns may therefore find it difficult to obtain support and training that is able to accommodate their needs.

The fact that a significant number of those who purchase small businesses are likely to place them back on the market within a relatively short space of time (Fuller, 1987) tends to underscore the need for support in this area. Moreover it is this factor that induced Fuller to implement training programmes that would help prospective purchasers avoid many of the pitfalls associated with buying a small business.

Even though the small business fraternity clearly comprises a wide range of ownership contexts, the tendency to promote and encourage new enterprises is clearly widespread. The continuance of this trend is further illustrated by the new rules governing the Small Firms Loan Guarantee Scheme, which stipulates that firms that have been trading for over five years will no longer be eligible for loan guarantees. Hussey (2005) argues that this change is difficult to justify, as the scheme has helped a great many mature businesses in the past. He also suggests that most of the new rules focus on the creation of new ventures and self-employment.

1.3. Identification of a Research Gap

Given that firms that were purchased as existing enterprises have received such little attention, the need for research is evident. The research conducted here therefore attempts to address this gap by examining the knowledge, skills and competences required to manage these firms successfully. The study also aims to identify the knowledge and learning sources that the OMs are most likely to exploit and how their needs might best be supported. A great deal of attention is therefore paid to skill prioritisation and the influence of factors such as ownership context, academic status and previous experience of small business ownership (individuals being considered experienced if they have been actively involved in their current business for two years or more and/or have owned a small business previously).

Given that small firm owners tend to measure success against factors such as personal satisfaction, pride in the job and flexibility (Loscocco, 1997; Walker & Brown, 2004; Haber & Reichel, 2005) perceptions of success are also examined as this could have a significant influence on the way skills are prioritised and moreover OMs perceptions of the key areas for skill development.

1.4. Research Aims and Objectives

The overall purpose of the study is to establish the needs of those who purchase existing enterprises and determine how these needs might best be supported. The study also aims to produce a framework that can be used to formulate learning strategies that will assist skill development and ongoing learning amongst the OMs who operate in this sub-sector. Based on the learning methods that are the most effective the framework will also demonstrate how various learning methods may be combined in order to best serve the needs of the individual.

To realize the purpose of the study the following objectives have been set out:

1. To determine which skills and competences are perceived as being the most important to the success of small firms that are purchased as established enterprises.

2.To identify the knowledge and learning sources that purchasers of established businesses use to develop skills and competences and ascertain which of these sources are the most beneficial.

3. To determine whether purchasers of established enterprises have particular support needs and, if such a need exists, how these needs might best be addressed

4.To determine how OM's who purchase established enterprises may formulate strategies for skill development and ongoing learning: this will be presented in the form of a framework that can be used to create learning plans

1.5. Contributions to Existing Research

Given that the study examines a sub-sector of the small business fraternity that has previously received little attention, the research clearly has much to contribute to the existing literature on small firms. Principally the research will facilitate a greater understanding of the knowledge, skills and competences that are required to successfully operate small firms that were purchased as going-concerns. Having established how the OM's of these firms develop the appropriate skills and

competences, it will be possible to determine which learning sources are the most valuable and therefore how the support and training needs of these people might best be addressed.

The literature review comprises two chapters, Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. Given that the study focuses on knowledge, skills, training, learning and competences, the review therefore documents small firm support provision, owner-manager training, the role of informal training, key learning sources and the various methods of learning. The review also documents leadership succession as this provides an indication of the issues that are likely to affect firms that have change owners through sale and purchase.

From the literature five specific propositions have been formulated, each of which is related to the research objectives. These are documented at the end of Chapter 3.

Chapter 4 focuses on research philosophies, research design and the methods of data collection employed. A detailed explanation is therefore provided in regards to why it was necessary to collate qualitative and quantitative data in order to fulfil the aims of the study. This chapter also documents the sampling methods that were used and the influence of geographical location on the types of business owned.

The analysis of the data and the subsequent findings are presented in the following three Chapters. Chapter 5 therefore examines the findings of the quantitative research (Phase 1) whilst Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 examine the results generated by the qualitative research (Phase 2 and Phase 3). Chapter 8 discusses the overall results of the study and Chapter 9 documents what can be concluded by the findings and to what degree each of the propositions are supported. This chapter also discusses the

limitations of the study, areas for further research, how the study contributes to the existing body of knowledge and the value of the research with regards to policy makers, support providers, OMs and other researchers.

CHAPTER 2

Small Firms: A Review of the Literature

2.1. Introduction

The literature review documents the key issues that are raised by the research objectives. Divided into two chapters, this phase of the review includes an examination of literature relating to OM personalities; motives for self-employment, the problems facing small firms, the managerial characteristics of small firms, and the way success is measured. Because the research focuses on small firms that were purchased as established businesses, the chapter also examines the existing literature relating to leadership succession, as the impact of a newly appointed successor might be very similar to the impact of a change of owner(s). A review of the literature pertaining to the issues faced by firms who have recently appointed a successor will therefore provide insight into the issues that may affect firms that have changed of owners.

The chapter also documents the managerial characteristics of small firms, the problems facing small firms and the managerial competences of small firms, as this will provide insight into the types of skills and competences that may be required for successful small business ownership. However given that success and performance are often measured against factors that are unrelated to the firm's financial performance (Brush, 1992; Buttner & Moore, 1997; Loscocco, 1997; Still & Timms, 1998; Walker & Brown, 2004) this phase of the review also examines the various ways that success is measured.

As there is often a great deal of confusion in regards to the definition of firm size (White 1999), the sizes used in the study are those suggested by the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) 2003:

Small firms	-	0-49 employees
Medium firms	-	50-249 employees
Large firms	-	250+ employees

2.2. Personality Characteristics of the Small Business Owner-Manager

This section of the chapter examines briefly the characteristics that are typically associated with small firm owners. This is because an individual's personality is likely to have a significant impact on the approach to small business ownership (Endler, 1983; Miller & Droge, 1986; Johnson & Ma, 1995) particularly with regards to skill development and methods of learning (Endler, 1983).

Given that personality may be defined as '*... a persons coherent manner of interacting with himself or herself and with his or her environment*' (Endler 1983: 179), identifying such traits is therefore far from simple, particularly as opinions often differ (Johnson & Ma, 1995). It therefore remains virtually impossible to produce a set of specific characteristics that typify a small business owner (Endler, 1983; Johnson & Ma, 1995). However by examining the various types of OM personality, Endler (1983) was able to identify various key factors that are likely to influence an individual's approach to training and skill development. He postulated that this information could be used to help develop support and training programmes.

Although Freud is often criticised (Esterson, 1993) the basic concept of his tripartite theory needs to be included here, as it helps explain how personality can influence individual actions and perceptions. This particular work of Freud's suggests that personality, in general, consists of two conflicting components, the id and the superego that acts alongside a controlling force - the ego. He claims that the id performs two functions, namely survival and a drive for pleasure. By being in a constant state of disequilibrium the id strives for stabilisation through realisation of its needs. The actualisation of these needs is according to Freud, regulated by the controlling force of society and the development of the individual's superego: this being resultant from interaction with it. Consequently, it is the superego that causes an individual to experience feelings of guilt and/or shame when he/she submits to the excesses of the id. The ego, acting as moderator between the id and the superego is therefore in constant demands to balance the needs of both (Freud, 1901). In simple terms this process may be described as one that seeks to *'Maximise instinctual gratification while minimising punishment and guilt'* (Lloyd et al., 1986: 700). In an attempt to extend his tripartite theory, Freud constructed a theoretical framework that outlined distinctive ways in which individuals could protect themselves from the internal conflict between the id and the superego. Freud claimed that through specific actions, such as denial and, projection an individual could obtain a release for urges and needs that was acceptable to society. This attempt to analyse the relationship between the id and the superego was through examination of either free association or dream analysis, both of which could be used to identify unconscious desires that remained unknown to the conscious mind. Despite the arguable validity of Freud's work (Esterson, 1993) it nevertheless represents an infrastructure on which other writers have been able to build. For example

Jung, (1999) suggests that in addition to the personal unconscious advanced by Freud there also exists a collective, or universal conscious that is shared by all human beings.

In regards to the concept of personality, the work of Erikson (1965) is significant for a number of reasons. For example he argues that an individual's ego is constantly developing in accordance with what occurs in their life, namely personal experiences and the effect this has on outlook and character. This argument is significant as it suggests that the personality is dynamic. Any study of an individual's personality is therefore subject to change over the course of time. Through an observational study involving Sioux Indians and Yirok people, Erikson was also able to establish the existence of cultural demands and the significant impact these have on the development of the individual. It is therefore possible to identify specific personality traits, which evolve from the culturally specific nature of any personality. Erikson's conclusions on trait theory have gathered further momentum through the results of various American studies, which showed that respondents consistently displayed higher internal loci of control than those from other countries (Reitz & Groff, 1974; Avriam & Milgram, 1977; Rawdon et al, 1995).

However for the purpose of this study it is necessary to examine research that focuses on entrepreneurial personality even though the findings are often mixed and contentious. For example the trait-situationalist debate continues to bewilder a number of writers, as it remains impossible, even after several decades of research, to identify and categorise a specific list of personality traits unique to small business entrepreneurs (Moran, 1998). Furthermore there also exists a great deal of bias, which has been engendered by those who have a vested interest in producing results that support the

situationalist viewpoint. For example if it can be shown that entrepreneurial skill and aptitude are the by-products of certain contextual factors then it is possible to present a strong argument for the provision of training programmes which stimulate these particular attributes. By contrast, findings that refute these claims can seriously heighten the notion that entrepreneurial learning programmes are both unnecessary and ineffectual.

In their attempts to evaluate the characteristics that typify entrepreneurs, very few writers have adopted an interactionalist viewpoint, the principles of which are based on the theory that an individual's character is essentially the product of inherited personality traits and situational conditioning (Bouchikhi, 1993). Bouchikhi made a serious attempt to outline a constructionalist framework for the purpose of understanding the entrepreneurial process. He suggests that it is the interaction of the entrepreneur's behaviour and personality as constrained and facilitated by chance and environment that determines the outcome. The outcome, namely success or failure is therefore a major determinant of future prospects.

Dunkelberg & Cooper (1982) found that it was possible to identify three specific classes of entrepreneur, these findings being based on surveys carried out on a sample of 1085 OM's.

Type 1 OM: who demonstrates an interest in growth and is not adverse to change

Type 2 OM: who often places a great deal of emphasis on their autonomy, which suggests they are fiercely independent and would therefore not be inclined to

participate in activities that require interaction, (networking etc.). It is also argued that the interdependency that so typifies a co-operative way of working would be viewed as a threat to those displaying this particular characteristic.

Type 3 OM: who is essentially craft orientated, where it is the work itself that acts as the main motivator. Such people are often unwilling and/or unable to adopt a strategy for managing their operations because priority is given to the task in hand. It is suggested that this type of OM would also be adverse to interaction with others.

Dunkelberg & Cooper claimed that Type 2 and Type 3 OMs often embarked upon self-employment as an alternative to working within a large organisation, which suggests that these people have a strong need for freedom and independence.

However, Chell et al., (1991) criticise this compartmentalisation, particularly in regards to OMs who are craft-orientated, as they feel it is biased towards those in the manufacturing industry. This is a valid argument, given that the economies studied are dominated by service sector organisations. Chell et al. go on to suggest that this particular classification also excludes a fundamental category: the caretaker. Although this is largely inconsequential, this point is significant, as the function of care taking is clearly evident within groups two and three.

In smaller establishments the owner-manager is totally responsible for the operating of the business and the development of long-term strategies (Miller & Droge, 1986). Miller & Droge therefore argue that *'Personality is likely to be an especially critical*

and perhaps overwhelmingly influential variable in small firms, in which the impact of the leader can be very direct and persuasive' (p. 539).

However, this particular concept is often disputed; the argument being that entrepreneurship is based almost entirely on an organisational management approach and not individual personality (Covin & Slevin 1986, 1989; Slevin & Covin 1990; Stevenson et al., 1989). This tends to suggest that the actual firm should be analysed, as this presents fewer difficulties than a psychological approach. Even if the organisational management approach could be satisfactorily applied to large organisations where no single individual's personality can dominate the decision making process, the same concept cannot be readily applied to smaller firms. In SME's, particularly micro-firms (i.e. firms with nine employees or less [European Observatory for SMEs, 1993]), entrepreneurial attitudes and business culture are interdependent. Decision-making, even when employees are included, will therefore closely reflect the personal values and characteristics of the OM (Johnson & Ma, 1995). This particular standpoint tends to support Miller's (1983) 'simple firm' theory where it is argued that within smaller firms, power is centralised at the top of the organisation. The organisational management approach may therefore be inappropriate when looking to examine the influence of the OM's personality on the business as a whole.

Looking at the use of personality traits as a means of selecting training entrants on to start-up programmes, Johnson & Ma (1995) discovered that this was a highly effective method of identifying OMs who were most likely to succeed. Having considered the various characteristics that are often attributed to successful entrepreneurs, they were

able to produce seven distinct categories that formed the basis of a research tool capable of assisting the selection process (Table 2.1.).

Vision (see Quincy Hunsiker, 1986; Filion 1991)
Need for achievement (see McClelland & Winter, 1969)
Need for autonomy (see Solomon & Winslow, 1988)
Internal locus of control (see Brockhaus & Nord 1979)
Opportunistic (see Stevenson et al., 1989)
Creativity & innovativeness (see Herbet & Link, 1988)
Calculated risk-taking (see Liles, 1978)

Source: Johnson & Ma 1995

Table 2.1. The seven key characteristics associated with successful entrepreneurs

Despite the significance of the findings, Johnson & Ma nevertheless felt that further research was required using other methods of data collection, as this would substantiate the results produced by the questionnaire used in their exploratory study. They therefore suggested that the questionnaire could alternatively, be employed as a fact-finding tool to identify skill-gaps when looking to produce a training needs analysis.

2.3. The Entrepreneurial Personality

Looking more closely at the characteristics that are often displayed by small business owners, Johnson (1990) discovered that in a review of twenty-three separate studies, designed to examine the relationship between entrepreneurship and the need for achievement, twenty supported the existence of a positive link between the need for achievement and entrepreneurial behaviour. However he suggests that the case is far

from proven, as the large number of instruments and methods employed to measure achievement make it virtually impossible to ensure that they all measure the same construct. As most entrepreneurial research is likely to be influenced by these factors, this point is significant. Johnson therefore concludes that until a consensual taxonomy is identified, the problem is likely to continue.

To examine the correlation between the need for achievement and growth, it is necessary to examine the work of McClelland (1961) who through the analysis of thirty-four countries over a twenty-eight year period (1950 –1977) was able to conclude that a relationship existed between a country's need for achievement and the level of economic growth. However when Gilleard (1989) replicated the analysis later, different results emerged which failed to support the conclusions drawn by McClelland. Although questions might be raised concerning reliability and validity, need for achievement instruments are nevertheless still widely used within the field of entrepreneurial research.

Examining entrepreneurial personality from a slightly different perspective, Perry (1990) suggests that variations in personality traits are not only evident between entrepreneurs and the population generally, but also within the entrepreneurial group. Table 2.2 below illustrates how the need for achievement has been identified as the trait that often segregates high-growth entrepreneurs from those whose firms are unlikely to grow.

Study	Need for Achievement	Need for Autonomy	Internal Locus of Control	Risk Taking Perception
Brodribb (1967)	+	+		
Carland (1982)	0			+?
Fargher (1971)	+			
Hewett (1987)				-
Niller (1983)			+	
Perry et al (1984)	+		0	
Perry et al (1986)	+		+	+
Perry et al (1988)	+		0	0
Smith & Miner (1984)	+			+?
Van de Ven et al (1984)	+	+		
Woodworth et al (1969)	+	+		

+ = a distinguishing characteristic, correlating positively with growth
 - = a distinguishing characteristic, correlating negatively with growth
 0 = not a distinguishing characteristic
 ? = possible, but not statistically significant relationship

Source: Adapted from Perry (1990: 24)

Table 2.2 – A review of psychological investigations comparing high-growth and normal growth entrepreneurs (in alphabetical order)

Another attribute that has been strongly linked to growth within small firms is the need for autonomy, although studies that examine locus of control and risk perception levels have often produced evidence to the contrary. Looking to explain the reasons for these differences after his own studies produced conflicting results Perry et al. (1984; 1988) concluded that the weakness lies in the choice of research instrument, which needs to be specific to entrepreneur research. However there now exists a psychological research instrument - the Durham Business School Personality Index (DBSPI) - which has been developed exclusively for this purpose.

Moran's (1998) study into OM personality traits and their impact on growth, also incorporates a form of Assessment Development Centre (ADC) as a means of profiling

small business OM's against a number of differing personality dimensions. By adopting this approach it was possible to gain a greater understanding of small business owners, which make it possible to assist not only OM's generally but also support and training providers.

Underscoring the point made by Perry et al. (1984, 1988) Moran also draws attention to the methodological weaknesses present within other studies, including the sentence completion technique employed by John Miner and his colleagues (Miner et al., 1989; Miner, 1990). Although this method showed potential, the results were nevertheless mixed and confusing (Johnson & Ma, 1995). In an attempt to overcome this problem, Moran (1998) invested in a wide range of research instruments that had the capacity to obtain data on a multi-dimensional scale. Discovering that High Growth OM's were leadership orientated, practically minded, non-system orientated and eager to accept change, Moran concluded that '*... growth is to an extent, inherent in the character and values of the individual...*' (p.31). These findings suggest that this type of research may need to be redirected into the identification of leadership potential rather than hunting for the elusive entrepreneur. However in regards to the research conducted here the most significant element of Moran's study is its focus on established firms. Moreover it has also been argued that established firms provide a more realistic representation of the entrepreneurial process, as it is more difficult to continually transform a business within a tumultuous environment than it is to create a new enterprise (Drucker, 1970).

Although a great deal of significance is attached to the growth potential of small firms some writers are critical of this, as they believe it is often misplaced and/or inappropriate (Watson, 1995). It is particularly significant that when examining

motivators for small business ownership, Watson discovered that a desire to grow was not regarded as a major factor. A more recent study conducted by MORE THAN Business (2005), shows similar trends, where the majority of the OMs surveyed were content to keep the business at the size that it is. In this instance only 3% indicated that they wished to expand. Although no reference is made to the sample size, the results nevertheless suggest growth is of interest to relatively few small firm owners.

2.4. Motives for Self-employment

This section of the review, which documents the motives for self-employment, is important, as it will provide insight into the reasons why people choose to purchase a small business.

Although there are a number of reasons why individuals chose to become self-employed, the need for independence is often the key motivator (Dunn & Holz-Eakin, 1996). It has also been found that the need for independence often outweighs the safety of employment and regular wages (Uusitalo, 2001). However the need for independence can be brought about for different reasons. For example, the high levels of self-employment amongst ethnic minorities and their desire for independence is often linked to the need to avoid labour market discrimination (Clark & Drinkwater, 1998, 2000). These findings also support the results of research conducted by Moore & Mueller (2002) who discovered that immigrants to Canada often chose self-employment as a way to avoid discriminating practices in wage labour.

There is also evidence, which suggests that individuals may be 'pushed' into self-employment as a result of poor or declining opportunities in the paid sector (Dennis,

1996, Statistic Canada, 1997). Whilst push factors such as employer downsizing and subcontracting appear to be important determinants of self-employment, a significant number of these people also appreciate the 'pull' factors such as flexibility and independence (Ekos Research Associates, 1998). However attempts to determine the influence of 'push' factors on levels of self-employment found little evidence to suggest that the impact is significant (Moore & Mueller 2002).

Other reasons why self-employment may be preferable includes those put forward by psychologists and sociologists who suggest that 'misfits' and workers who frequently change jobs often become self-employed in order to take more control (Evans & Leighton, 1989). A number of people also view self-employment as '*...the lesser of labour market evils...*' (Stutt & Sutherland 2003: 98).

It is therefore concluded that even though people become self-employed for a number of reasons, the need for independence is frequently the key motivator.

2.5. The Problems Facing Small Firms

Understanding the problems facing small firms is important for a number of reasons. Firstly an OM's perception of a problem can influence their behaviour, which will often induce them to seek advice and information (Walsh, 1988; Pineda et al., 1998). In regards to support providers an awareness of the potential difficulties OMs are likely to experience can aid the development of small business assistance programmes and other initiatives designed to support OMs.

In an attempt to identify the type of problems encountered by the average small firm Huang & Brown (1999) examine the relative significance of the problems incurred and what may transpire as a result. Their findings suggest that the areas where small firms are most likely to experience problems are sales and marketing, human resource management and managing the business generally. However in this instance promotion, market research and training were the areas that gave the greatest cause for concern, all of which are knowledge/skill related.

These findings tend to support the results from research conducted by Romano & Ratnatunga (1995) where sales and marketing were considered not only to be the most problematic areas for small firms but also the most vital in terms of survival and growth. Alongside a limited understanding of marketing strategies and techniques (Geursen, 1996) and financial restriction (Weinrauch et al., 1991) there is often a general lack of marketing skills, (Thomson & Gray, 1999) which can increase the severity of these problems. Significantly, Weinrauch et al. (1991) found that a lack of financial resources can also act as a barrier to the uptake of training. However it is the inability to manage the firm that often causes it to fail, particularly in regards to new enterprises where ambition and enthusiasm often outweigh business and management skills (Huang & Brown, 1999). Huang & Brown also found that the most significant issues surrounding managerial competence were those involving either training and development or the recruitment and selection of staff. However training issues were shown to be particularly problematic due to the inappropriateness of the facilities on offer. Other significant findings include the way different problems occur in different industries. For example Huang & Brown's research revealed that those operating in the service industry are likely to experience fewer problems raising capital than those

operating in other sectors, although this is often attributed to the fact that service businesses tend to require much lower levels of financial investment. Similarly it was the small manufacturers who experienced most problems with activities associated with production and operations whereas difficulties relating to cash flow and debt management were more likely to affect wholesalers and retailers. Looking to determine the effect of firm size, Huang & Brown discovered that whilst smaller firms were more likely to experience problems raising capital, human resource and operations management gave little cause for concern. Reflecting the findings of Terpstra & Olson, (1993) their research also found that general management and the management of human resources tend to become more problematic during the growth stage.

In an attempt to address these issues the Business Growth and Development Programme (BGP) organised a series of seminars and training programmes that were scheduled to run annually (Huang et al., 1998). However when these programmes were evaluated it was discovered that many of the problems facing small firms had not been brought to the attention of the BGP manager. It was therefore concluded that there needed to be more communication between small business owners and the governing body concerned.

2.6. The Managerial Characteristics of Small Firms

Gaining insight into the managerial characteristics of small firms is clearly important as small firms are often regarded as scaled down versions of larger organisations (Welsh & White, 1981). Welsh & White therefore suggest that examinations into the managerial characteristics of small firms should avoid making this assumption. Equally it cannot be assumed that all small firms are alike (Goss, 1991). The table

below illustrates four assumptions of homogeneity that frequently lead to serious misunderstandings about small firms:

The general tendency to examine small firms without considering inter-industrial differences and their broader economic and social context

The general belief that all small firms are characterised by common interests and compatibility amongst owners and employees

The presumption that all small firms share the same qualities (entrepreneurship, innovation etc.)

The presumption that all small firms display the same organisational structures

Source: Goss (1991)

Table 2.3. Four assumptions of homogeneity that typically lead to misunderstandings about small firms

Rainnie (1989) therefore suggests that small firms are '*... characterised by a wide range of dissimilarities and distinctions*' (p.172). Looking at the differences that exist in regards to industry it has been found, for example, that OM's operating in the service sector, where there is large amount of customer contact, are more likely to focus on human resources whilst those operating in the manufacturing industry tend to concentrate on systems and operations. Consequently the skills required to perform specific tasks also differ from industry to industry (O'Neill, 1990; Rainnie, 1991; Martin & Staines, 1994; NatWest, 1995). For instance, those situated in the service industry often place a great deal of emphasis on 'people' skills and personal competences, whereas those operating in high-tech industries will be more concerned with the development of technical skills. As a result the training needs of small firms differ in accordance with business type (Gibb, 1987; O'Neill, 1990).

Other differences that have been identified are those relating to management practice where it has been found that there are a wide range of differing practices which depend on factors such as ownership status, culture and management style (Morris & Pinnington, 1993). Another source of variation is that which arises from ownership status, where a distinction is made between the 'self-employed', working in the capacity of sole proprietor; owner-controllers who work closely with their staff; owner-controllers who do not work closely with their staff and owner-director controlled firms with established managerial hierarchies (Scase & Goffee 1982).

The final source of variation and the most relevant to the research conducted here is that concerning maturity levels (Scase & Goffee, 1987). Here attention is drawn to the stereotypical characterisation of small firms, which tends to imply they are all in the innovative phase of their organisational lifecycle regardless of age or context. This is clearly an ongoing phenomenon even though there is evidence, which suggests that many small firms, especially service companies, are in or about to enter the maturity stage of their product lifecycle (Mill, 1989). As these firms are likely to have experienced significantly lower growth they may therefore need to adopt alternative strategies in order to remain competitive. This reconceptualisation of applied tactics may also require a different management style to that which is required for innovative firms in pursuit 'focused differentiation' (Schuler & Jackson, 1987).

However Morris & Pinnington (1993) found that there are often a number of negative attributes that act as barriers to the performance and success of small firms. For example Scase & Goffee, (1987) found that the lack of confidence amongst small firm owners often prohibits them from expanding the business even when finance is

available. Moreover OM's often find it difficult to delegate even when they are clearly suffering from tiredness and overwork. Scase & Goffee also found that small firm owners tend to have a limited knowledge of finance, marketing and human resource management and are often plagued with uncertainties when looking to motivate staff. Clearly this general lack of confidence and growth orientation can increase the firm's vulnerability, which makes it more likely to fail. However these problems are frequently linked to the limited education and experience of OM's (Stanworth & Gray, 1992) and the short-term, information-orientated training they tend to engage in (Watkins, 1982).

2.7. Managerial Competences in Small Firms

The term 'competence' is often used to describe the types of skills, knowledge and personal attributes associated with effective management. However the notion of competence is a much-debated issue, the arguments put forward reflecting the differing assumptions and methodological approaches of various researchers (Martin & Staines 1994). In his attempt to segregate 'competency' from 'competence', Woodruffe, (1993) suggests that the former refers mainly to the dimensions of behaviour that underlie competent task performance. This particular term should therefore be used only in relation to person-orientated variables that people bring with them to the job (i.e. their 'inputs'). By contrast 'competence' is the preferred terminology for describing the task-orientated activities that are associated with effective performance within the managerial role. However each is often criticised from the standpoint of the other.

The inputs approach, which tends to focus on personal attributes and the knowledge required to perform managerial tasks, assumes that a very specific set of characteristics

and behaviours are essential to this regardless of the context in which it takes place. However it is often argued that personal qualities are not a guarantee against ineffective management: this applying to the organisation and the individual.

The outcomes approach has also been criticised, mainly as a result of the tendency to focus on '*... the identification of universal and frequently mechanistic lists of managerial competences...*' (Martin & Staines 1994: 24) that fail to recognise the type of managerial work which is incapable of standardisation, subject to rapid change or dependent upon specific situations (Storey, 1994). This helps to explain why management is frequently perceived as creative rather than technical: effective management often relying on intuitiveness and 'gut-feeling'. However these attributes are difficult to define and measure, which means that any universal standardisation such as that adopted by the MCI are of little use when looking to address issues such as learning and/or management development (Hirsch & Bevan, 1988; Burgoyne, 1990). It has also been suggested that this type of standardisation is actually counterproductive, as it '*... discourages the integrative learning so necessary to effective management ...*' (Martin & Staines, 1994:24). It is therefore argued that it might be appropriate to use terms such as universal and context-specific competences. However the question remains, what emphasis, if any, should be placed on the identification and assessment of person-versus task-orientated competences. These points are particularly relevant to small firms who are unlikely to experience the same problems as large organisations who, ironically are the main providers of data on managerial competences (Curran et al., 1995; Curran & Blackburn, 2000).

2.8. Leadership Succession

Leadership succession is an important consideration in regards to the study, because the research focuses on firms that have changed owners. Whilst it is acknowledged that a change of owner through sale and purchase is contextually different from the type of change that occurs when a successor is appointed, the two events are nevertheless comparable.

Leadership succession is clearly a complex process, which affects not only those situated within the organisation but also the firm's economic and political climate (Gilmore, 1988, Preece, 1998; Sharma et al., 2001). Changes within this sphere therefore cannot be considered lightly as the successor is responsible '*...for action on and reaction to the organisations strategy and performance...*' (Stavrou, 2003: 331). As companies are largely governed by the decisions made by top managers, or in the case of small establishments, owner-managers, (Birley, 2002) it is their responsibility to ensure the continuation of effective management control and involvement (Mancuso, 1990). In the case of owner-managed firms these changes often have a negative impact on the firm, particularly if they occur during the lifetime of the founder member (Fox et al., 1996) where leadership succession is often unplanned (Rubenson & Gupta, 1996; Davis & Harveston, 1998). In family owned firms these problems can be exacerbated by the nepotistic culture of the firm, where often the main priority is to keep the control of the business within the family (Aronoff & Ward, 1993; Birley, 2002). However there is also evidence which suggests that careful succession planning can actually help regenerate a stagnant firm by challenging the established traditions and concepts that are entrenched within it (Ward, 1987; Birley, 2002).

Whilst succession planning is essential to a firm's continuity and prosperity (Ward, 2000; Brockhaus, 2004), this is often left to chance, particularly in family owned firms (Leon-Guerro et al., 1998; Mandl, 2004). Some researchers claim that this apparent neglect is brought about by the emotions generated by the process as it often forces incumbents to face their mortality and makes other family members confront the need for change (Lansberg, 1988; Le Breton-Miller et al., 2004; Sten, 2004). Given that the succession process in small family owned firms is different from that of large firms additional complications may also arise (Fox et al., 1996). For example in large firms the date at which the CEO is replaced is usually agreed upon in advance. Moreover the frequency of succession is greater in these firms because they tend to produce a larger number of possible successors (Gorden & Rosen, 1981). By contrast in small and medium sized family-owned businesses the number of successors is limited and there is rarely a consensus on when succession is due to take place.

However as Gudmundson (1999) claims that in family owned businesses a unique set of issues arise because family owned firms are organised around a set of *'...emotionally charged interpersonal relationships that can lead to positive or negative consequences'* (Motwanti et al., 2006: 472). Consequently what works in one firm may not work in another (Sharma et al., 1997) as goals, strategy and organisational performance differ from business to business (Stummer et al., 2004).

Having evaluated the previous studies that focus on succession planning in family owned firms Motwani et al (2006) claim that this can be grouped into three main research 'streams'. The first of these deals with the definition and overview of succession planning, where attempts have been made to provide a clear definition of

‘succession planning’ in family owned firms (Miller, 1998; Shepher & Zacharakis, 2000; Suarez et al., 2001). Research conducted in this area tends therefore to focus on the elements that are essential to the succession planning process (Horowitz, 1997; Hutcheson, 2000; Sten, 2004), the importance of planning for succession (Dana, 1999; Scully, 2000; Spector, 2000), the problems associated with succession planning (Prince, 1999; Sten, 2004) and guidelines for effective succession planning (Beech 1998; Emley, 1999).

The second research stream focuses on the development of conceptual models for assessing and implementing succession planning strategies in family owned firms. A number of researchers have therefore developed models/strategies that deal with succession planning within this context (Stavrou, 1999; Manikutty, 2000; Suarez et al., 2001; MacWhirter et al., 2004, Le Breton-Miller et al., 2004). The third research stream which might be considered as the culmination of all research conducted into succession planning in family owned businesses (Motwani et al., 2006), deals with the assessment of the actual succession planning that takes place in family owned firms. However these firms are not a homogenous group (Sharma et al., 1997). Moreover there are also distinct differences between family owned businesses and non-family owned businesses, including firm demographics (e.g. age, industry product/market), owner-manager demographics (e.g. age, gender, education, and experience) and family characteristics (e.g. culture, family structure, generation) (Chrisman et. al, 1998).

Recent research has also found that whilst the founder members of family SMEs are keen to pass ownership of the firm to their offspring, these people often sell the business on to outsiders (Sten, 2004). Sten argues that this particular situation creates a

psychological barrier for the founder member that may inhibit the sale and therefore prolong the agony for all who are involved. Paradoxically when the decision has been made, the founder will often proceed with the sale at the fastest pace possible. However it has been shown that when family businesses are sold in this way the family members that remain are often replaced as the company undergoes significant changes that affect the nature and culture of the firm (MacWhirter et al., 2004).

The criteria used when selecting a successor is usually the same regardless of firm size. For example a recent study conducted by Motwani et al., 2006, found that one of the most sought-after attributes when looking to appoint a successor is the individual's level of commitment. However in small firms high priority is often placed on strong sales and marketing skills, which are perceived they key drivers for business growth (Brockhaus, 2004, Stummer, 2004). Motwani et al., (2006) suggest that this particular criterion extends models of succession planning beyond processes to include specific business related skills. By placing emphasis on these particular skills the firm is more likely to achieve strategic business growth, thereby increasing its ability to survive to the next generation. Significantly in firms where there are a large number of family members more attention is paid to the harmoniousness of the relationships between the successor and these family members. However it has been found that relationship issues are also highly prioritised in firms that employ family and non-family members (Brockhaus, 2004).

2.9. Success and Performance Measurement

Although a definition of success within the context of this study is included in the front of the thesis (page xvi) it is nevertheless necessary to examine the various ways small

firm owners measure success as this could have a significant influence on the way skills are prioritised and OMs perceptions of the key areas for skill development. Given that the research aims to establish which skills and competences are particularly important to the success of firms that were purchased as established enterprises, the way success is perceived and measured is therefore significant.

Deciding how to measure the achievements of an enterprise is often difficult because success and performance are not easy to define (Cameron, 1986). Some researchers often view survival as the key determinant of success, due the challenges and risks that accompany small business ownership (Van de Ven et al., 1984). However it has been argued that success and survival are separate factors and should therefore be regarded as such when examining a firm's performance (Kalleberg & Leicht, 1991). As the measurement of performance is clearly complex, it has been suggested that multiple measures of performance should be used (Kalleberg & Leicht, 1991; Westhead et al., 2001). Moreover it recognized that the use of single measures, for example profit often fails to provide a realistic insight of the firm in the long term, which as a consequence does not reflect the firm's ability to survive and prosper (Barney, 1997). It has also been suggested that the type and nature of the industry should be taken into consideration when measuring performance (Stearns et al., 1995; Hofer, 1998), as there are goals that stem from the conditions and characteristics that are unique to that particular industry (Lynch, 1998; Getz & Carlsen, 2000).

There are number of approaches that may be used to measure business performance, including the goal approach which measures progress towards the realization of organizational goals and the system resource approach which assesses performance

against the firms ability to obtain resources to maintain the organizational system (Yuchtman & Seashore, 1967). By contrast the stakeholder approach and the competitive value approach enable the firm's performance to be assessed from a number of aspects including customers competitors and internal stakeholders (Daft, 1995). However the approach most frequently used is the goal approach as the output goals are relatively simple to measure (Haber & Reichel, 2005). It has also been suggested that the goal approach is more appropriate in regards to small firms as it tends to reflect the OMs point of view (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978) and '*...seems to better fit small entrepreneurial ventures with a significant representation of self-employed entrepreneurs or lifestyle family-owned businesses*' (Haber & Reichel, 2005). However this particular approach has led to an over-reliance on financial variables to measure performance, namely profit, revenues and return on investment (Gartner, 1990). In the case of small and businesses the goal approach will often focus on the revenue and number of employees (Orser et al. 2000), as these firms often lack profit histories and/or are not expected to show profitability during the first years of trading (McGee et al., 1995; Merz & Sauber, 1995).

However it is argued that measuring performance solely against factors that are finance related neglects other relevant performance dimensions of small enterprises that need to be taken into account, for example market share and employee numbers (Bouchikhi, 1993). It has also been suggested that using the financial aspects of the firm as performance indicators tend to neglect long-term considerations as they reflect only the current state of the firm, which may not be an accurate representation of the its ability to survive in the long term (Birley & Westhead, 1994). However Phillips (1999) argues

that profitability in the short term is a key factor in determining the firm's ability to achieve long-term objectives.

Another important factor that needs to be taken into consideration when measuring performance are the differences between service and product industries. For example in service industries customers are frequently involved in the productions process and, therefore significantly influence its outcomes (Gronroos, 2000). As a result customer experience service performance and quality at the time of delivery (Haber & Reichel, 2005). Providing a high quality service is therefore essential to creating satisfactory delivery (Grove et al., 2000). Moreover customer satisfaction may act as a key indicator of financial health (Anderson & Fornell, 2000) as this particular factor is often associated with repurchase intent and recommendation (Collier, 1994). It has also been found that customer loyalty can lead to high market share and profitability (Burnes et al., 2000; Zahorik et al., 2000; Haber & Lerner, 1999), which helps to secure the firms future revenues (Rust & Zahorik, 1993) and establish its long-term reputation (Anderson & Fornell, 2000). This point is particularly significant in regards to the research conducted here as the purchase price of an established business includes the firm's goodwill which *'...based on the profitability of the business...is the sum paid ...at the time of purchase...in recompense for the trade [custom] built up in previous years...'* (Fuller, 1987: p15).

Given that the research aims to identify the skills and competences that are particularly important to the success of firms that were purchased of going concerns, it is necessary to document the various ways OMs (personally) measure the success of their business. Although most discussion of success in the existing literature refers to the financial

criteria, it is nevertheless acknowledged that small firm owners measure success against factors that are unrelated to finance and profitability (Walker & Brown, (2004). Although the most obvious measure of success is profitability and growth Walker and Brown found that small firm owners are more likely to measure success against personal satisfaction, independence and flexibility. There is also evidence to suggest that perceptions of success are often linked to the reasons for starting a business in the first instance. For example there is a great deal of evidence which suggests that a large number of women were initially motivated to start businesses because of the need to balance domestic responsibilities (Brush, 1992; Buttner & Moore, 1997; Loscocco, 1997; Still & Timms, 1998). Therefore a predominant aspect of their success has been non-financial affective measures. These measures along with other non-financial measures of success such as autonomy and job satisfaction can be difficult to quantify, as they are subjective and personally defined (Walker & Brown, 2004). By contrast, profit, turnover and financial performance are easier to understand and can be used as benchmarks for future measures. However it is significant to note that '*...whilst non-financial measures are based on criteria that are personally determined by the individual OM, commonalities within the cohorts of SBOs [small business owners] occur...*' (Walker & Brown, 2004: 579).

2.10. Summary

The review clearly documents how the personality of the OM can affect his/her approach to small firm ownership. For example the strong need for independence that is a key characteristic of many small business owners has been shown to significantly influence the approach to skill development and training. Although a great deal of emphasis is placed on the growth potential of small firms, there is evidence to suggest

that small firm owners often have no desire to grow. This tends to be reflected in the numerous ways that OMs measure success, the majority of which have little bearing on the firm's financial performance and/or its profitability. The review also provides insight into the issues and problems that firms face when a successor is appointed. Whilst this is clearly contextually different from a change of owner through sale purchase, insight is nevertheless provided into what can occur when the control and responsibility of a firm is transferred from one person to another.

CHAPTER 3

OM Skills, Learning and the Provision of Support and Training: A Review of the Literature

3.1. Introduction

Given that the research aims to identify the skills and competences that are perceived as being the most important to the success of firms that were purchased as established enterprises and the knowledge and learning sources that are most beneficial, this phase of the review documents the skills and competences that are required for successful small business ownership; methods of training; forms of learning, and the support and training provision available to small firms. As the research also aims to determine whether purchasers of established businesses have particular support and training needs, this phase of the review also documents the training and support needs of small firms and the ability of support providers to meet these needs. The final sections of the chapter provide a critique of the literature (Chapters 2 and 3) and highlight the issues that have emerged from the review which are important to the research.

3.2. Establishing and Addressing the Training Needs of Small Firms

Many of the problems associated with small business ownership have been attributed to a lack of OM skills and competences (Dun & Bradstreet, 1994; Gatewood et al., 1995; Jennings & Beaver 1997; Fitzsimmons et al., 2001; LaBrasseur et al., 2003). Many researchers therefore argue that access to appropriate training would help to alleviate these difficulties (Garavan & O'Kinneide, 1994a,b; Shepherd & Douglas, 1996; Atherton et al., 1997; Gibb & Cotton, 1998). However establishing the training needs of small firms is often a complicated process.

For example, studies that have examined OM training schemes, suggest that particular attention should be paid to the programme content, which needs to take into consideration the firm's age, size and stage of development (Mendham, 1985). Gibb (1987) also argued that by establishing the needs of small firms at different stages of development, key areas could be identified and incorporated into a phased process of learning. Firms would therefore be able to join the scheme at a time when it is most appropriate for them to do so. However, Gibb suggested that single support schemes would be unsuitable, as course content and time scales need to vary in accordance with the different types of participating businesses. Similarly Segal Quince Wickstead (1988) and the DTI (1999b) claimed that it is difficult to classify firms by type and stage of development due to the varying characteristics that exist amongst them. Providers therefore find it difficult to provide typical forms of support as each business has its own unique and specific requirements (DTI, 1999a).

Focusing on the key areas for skill development O'Neill (1990) found amongst his sample that finance and marketing were the types of modules most needed. Although management and staff/personnel were also rated highly the figures were significantly lower. By contrast Martin & Staines (1994) discovered that particular emphasis was placed on the need to develop 'people skills'. However they argue that it can be difficult to pinpoint key areas for skill development, as small firm owners tend to perceive management as a 'craft' *'...which is best developed on the job rather than as a set of ideas and skills that exist independently of the industrial context and that can be taught in an off-the job setting'* (p.31).

However different surveys produce different results. For example after reviewing the different findings of seven separate training-need surveys, O'Neill (1990) concluded

that although this type of survey provides an indication of priority areas, it is still necessary to establish the individual requirements of each firm '*...by means of a thorough organisational and human resource analysis*' (p.51).

Identifying the key areas for development can nevertheless be a complicated process for a number of reasons. For example OM's perceptions of their training needs are often different from the suggestions put forward by training providers (Gill, 1988; Curran & Stanworth, 1989). This problem is particularly apparent amongst inexperienced OM's, as they are not in a position to judge their needs objectively (Gibb, 1987). As each client consists of an intricate mix of buyer roles, all of which has a variety of needs, the process is further complicated, as these elements combine tangible and intangible aspects with the underlying required objective (Smith & Delahaye 1988).

Insufficient assessment of personal suitability to become self-employed

Insufficient awareness of the need for a business plan

Limited knowledge and skills in specific areas (i.e. market evaluation, research and planning, accounting, book-keeping, financial forecasting, cash-flow planning and taxation)

Poor abilities to assess financial viability and determine appropriate funding policies to handle cash deficit periods

Identifying operating problems post-launch and initiating response plans to improve future performance or minimise losses should closure be required.

Source: Chaston, 1992

Table 3.1. The key gaps that exist amongst support and training Initiatives for start-ups

In an attempt to design a scheme that provides effective support and training for business start-ups during their first year of trading, Chaston (1992) uses a strategic

planning approach to identify a number of gaps that exist amongst the schemes operating in South Devon and Cornwall (Table 3.1)

To bridge these gaps, Chaston (1992) developed a detailed training plan that concentrated on the needs of OM's during the early stages of growth, comprising three main phases the plan therefore focused on considering self employment; developing and validating a business plan, launch and the first year of trading.

However consideration also needs to be given to the style of the programme and its key objectives. Curran & Stanworth (1989) provide a broad classification, namely entrepreneurial education; education for small business ownership and self-employment; continuing small business education and small business awareness education. They argue that although schemes that focus on educating small business owners are probably the most cost-effective, a need also exists for continuous learning programmes. Similar views are held by Gill (1985: 86) who feels that support and advice should be an on-going process, which provides '*...a non-evaluative and non-threatening sounding board for business ideas and strategic plans...*' Having discovered that OM's learn more quickly through practical experience, it is claimed that a need also exists for a scheme that facilitates '*...systematic proactive personal contact...*' where small firms are able to receive help with problems as and when they arise.

El Namaki (1990) also argues that training programmes need to take into consideration the growth stage of individual firms. Training schemes that aim to assist small firm owners should therefore play to the strong side of the entrepreneur; provide feedback and advice and encourage 'cross-fertilisation' where information can be exchanged

between different groups of OMs. He further suggests that training should stress the vision more than the mechanics, as it is visions that provide the main channels for strategy and development.

The advantage of this type of action-learning is highlighted by Gill (1988) who argues that OMs are often reluctant to listen to the advice of training providers. Given that this frequently stems from class differences and/or the questionable motives of providers, Gill suggests that developing networks that facilitate close contact between small-business owners could help alleviate these problems, as it would bring into effect a two-way learning process where individuals are able to assist each other. He also claims that this particular approach could be developed to establish a diverse network of experts who are able to provide OMs with specialist support and advice.

Although there is wide range of training facilities and programmes available to small firm owners (Barrow, 1995), time shortage often acts as a barrier to the uptake of training (Vickerstaff, 1992; Marlow, 1992; Curran et al., 1998; Kerr & McDougall, 1999; Henderson & Sutherland, 2000; Soriano, 2002). The length and timing of modular programmes is therefore likely to have a significant impact on training uptake. However it is difficult to pinpoint the type of training that is likely to be the most effective, as the findings tend to differ from study to study. For example O'Neill (1990) found the most popular forms of training were either day-release courses or those that took place during the evening and/or weekends. By contrast more recent research suggests that small firm owners are likely to prefer seminars (Carrier, 1999; Henderson & Sutherland, 2000), which are often used in conjunction with other methods of learning such as informal training and/or experiential learning (Carrier, 1999). Carrier (1999) also discovered that small firm owners would benefit from being appointed a

'mentor' who could advise them when serious issues arose. However whilst university lecturers and professionals were perceived as having a great deal to offer their methods were considered too theoretical and classroom orientated. Carrier therefore concluded that small firm OM's need and prefer individualised training that takes into consideration the exact requirements of the firm. Significantly short practical courses are still popular amongst small firm owners (Soriano, 2002).

Although short courses and modularisation are popular amongst the small business fraternity, this particular method of training is often met with scepticism, as the structure of this type of programmes tend to shift emphasis away from the continuity of OM training provision. It is also feared that contact with the real world could be broken if the teaching becomes subject orientated and knowledge replaces action-learning (Gibb, 1987). In a later study, Gibb (1993) developed an alternative approach that derives its key components from the organisational dynamics of the small business:

- Component 1 Enterprise in the classroom that concentrates on student control, responsibility, informality, freedom and flexibility

- Component 2 A project management structure designed to deal with areas of uncertainty which act as a vehicle for learning

- Component 3 An enterprising style of teaching whereby students are able to learn through experience, the art of problem-solving and mistake rectification

By combining these components and adapting them for use in the classroom, Gibb suggested that the interest of the participating OMs would be stimulated and better results achieved.

However attempting to address training needs through educational establishments is often problematic. For example it is argued that universities often find it difficult '*... to successfully engage the culture and norms of SME management ...*' (Edwards & Jones, 1999: 88). This is because the success criteria and value systems of these establishments are fundamentally different from those who own and manage SMEs. Consequently finding staff that have the relevant experience to meet the requirements of these firms may also cause problems. Edward and Jones therefore argue that it is unlikely that these institutions will be able to accommodate such needs within the near future, as existing systems cannot be modified immediately.

3.3. Management Development

Although management development and the development of management skills are not mutually exclusive, management development tends to focus on the '*individual behaviour change brought about through a process of providing the manager with new skills, attitudes or knowledge*' (Molander & Winterton, 1994: 87).

The significance of managerial competence is highlighted by MacRae (1991) and Henry & Gray (1995), who discovered that the main feature distinguishing high growth from low-growth firms was the training, academic status and experience of those who occupied senior management positions. MacRae (1991) also found that the chief executives of growth-orientated firms are more likely to take an active interest in their current market environment, generate and promote organisational structure and

recognise the importance of developing specialist management skills. It is these particular attributes that are the focus of government-sponsored initiatives designed to improve managerial development within the small business sector (DTI, 1994; 1998; DfEE, 2000; CEML, 2002).

In Britain the need to demonstrate links between management development, competitiveness and business performance have featured in UK policy since the eighties (Confederation of British Industry [CBI], 1986; DTI, 1994, 1998; Department for Education and Employment [DfEE], 2000; Council for Excellence in Management and Leadership [CEML], 2002). Moreover effective leadership and management competences are now viewed as the key to successful competitiveness and innovation (Gray & Maybey, 2005). However participation in management development activities is generally much lower in small firms than in large corporations and public sector organisations (IFF Research, 1998; Storey, 2004). In firms that employ less than twenty people and firms that are operated on a sole ownership basis the take-up of these activities is particularly low as the approach to management development tends to be less formal (Curran et al., 1998; NJM European and Economic Consultants, 2000; Organisation for Co-operation and Development, 2003; EC, 2003). Significantly research conducted by Henderson and Sutherland, (2000) suggests that small firm owners often participate in short courses and/or seminars to help address their management development needs.

For the past thirty years the preference for informal activities is a strong feature of management development amongst small and micro firms across Europe (Bolton, 1971; National Audit Office, 1988; EC, 2003), although there are pockets of SMEs who adopt a formal structured approach to addressing not only management development, but also

the way they conduct their business generally (Stanworth & Gray, 1991; Storey, 1994; Curran et al., 1996b) Thomson et al., 1997). Nevertheless unstructured approaches to management development rarely equate to a lack of management learning as management development also occurs via other means that are beyond the boundaries of informal and formal methods (Gray & Maybey, 2005). Similarly it cannot be assumed that training and development activities will automatically result in learning (Antonacopoulou, 2001; Gray & Maybey, 2005). Given that many SMEs are able to survive their start-up years, Gray & Maybey conclude that smaller firms are more likely to develop learning styles and tacit skills that enable them to *'develop the knowledge necessary for the continued adaptation, change and survival of their firms without any evident need for formal management development'* (p. 471).

Emerging from Storey's (1994) contrasting models of management development is a three-fold taxonomy that encompasses the various ways in which managers may be trained and developed. These models are either formal top-down and highly structured or geared towards self development:

- i) Via structured training processes that are administered by some central agency through which all must pass to gain official recognition. Providers of these programmes include colleges, universities and governing bodies such as the Management Charter Initiative (Antonacopoulou & Fitzgerald, 1996) who codify and standardise management competences and disciplines (Henderson and Sutherland, 2000),
- ii) Through a process of self-development, that tends to follow informal, unstructured ways of learning that is embodied in the assumption that

individuals 'own' the problems of their personal development. This is often supported by individual learning plans and strategies, or

iii) Via an intermediary process whereby self-development is supported by 'organisationally provided mechanisms' (Storey, 1994: 370) where learning takes place through networking, coaching, mentoring etc.

However many OMs shy away from formal training activities (ENSR, 1996; Gray, 1998) even though small firm support providers offer a wide range of programmes. Although it is often argued that the majority of training facilities fail to address the needs of SME's (Thomson & Gray, 1999; Curran & Blackburn, 2000), the poor take up of these programmes are nevertheless one of the main reasons why management development is often perceived as a poor area for investment (Harrison, 1997; Henderson and Sutherland, 2000).

Although the under-utilisation of government initiatives can be linked to the general reluctance of OMs to participate in formal management development activities (Storey, 1994; Gray, 1997; 1998), the uptake of formal management development activities is also influenced by limited financial resources and time shortage (Henderson & Sutherland, 2000; CEML, 2002; Gray & Maybey, 2005).

However there is particularly strong correlation between the non take-up of formal activities and firm size (Noble, 1997: NJM European, Economic and Management Consultants, 2000, OECD, 2003). It is therefore argued that the differences between small and large firms may be partly linked to a strong cultural preference for informal approaches to management development (Gray & Maybey, 2005). Gray & Maybey also claim that as small firms are more limited in regards to resources, they tend to be more

instrumental in their approach to management development. Small firm owners are therefore more likely to link management development with constraining and optimising resources than future objectives. Moreover it has also been found that small firms tend to link their management development activities to practical outcomes such as customer satisfaction and staff retention (Gray & Maybey, 2005).

Previous studies have also shown that the perceived management development needs in micro/small firms differs from those in medium firms (Constable & McCormick, 1987). A similar study conducted ten years later, that also included research into management development activities, showed that these differences fell into three specific categories, namely training; recruitment practice and the utilization of business advisors and consultants (CBI, 1995). Significantly the findings showed that training was the most widely used management development tool along with the use of consultants.

Examining the effectiveness of management development activities, Wong et al., (1997) discovered there was a positive impact on performance when analysing a matched sample of 138 participants on the Business Growth Training Scheme. However more recent evidence suggests that there is generally a weak link between management development activities and improvements in business performance (Storey, 2004), although in growth orientated small firms that have clear business strategies the link is likely to be significantly stronger (Thomson & Gray, 1999; Patton & Marlow, 2002).

Although there are a wide range facilities that focus on management development it has been suggested that OM's could also benefit from NVQ's (Bryan, 1995). Although these

programmes are often geared towards large scale organisations, Bryan nevertheless argues that NVQs could be used by small firm owners to help to (1) address the major areas of business failure and management incompetence; (2) improve the 'knowledge base' and demonstrate management skills within the workplace. He also suggested that the flexibility of NVQs enable people to manage their own training. However no reference was made to the lack of people (usually superiors) who are able provide 'witness statements'.

To help overcome this and other similar difficulties, four awarding bodies began offering NVQs in Small Business Ownership/Planning. These were derived from the NVQ standards (level 3) and developed by the small firms lead body (1) BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council); (2) LCCI (local Chambers of Commerce and Industry Examinations Board); (3) UODLE (University of Oxford Delegacy of Local Examinations) and (4) RSA Examinations Board.

In 1995 an NVQ level 4 was also introduced which focused on 'Business Development and Implementation' (National Council for Vocational Qualifications/DTI, 1995). Although OM NVQ's were designed specifically to facilitate the development of entrepreneurial skills within the workplace (Small Firms Lead Body, 1996; London Chamber of Commerce & Industry, 1997; University of Oxford Delegacy of Local Examinations, 1997), the take up of NVQs has generally been low. One reason that helps to accounts for this is the confusing way NVQ's are presented, particularly in regards to the wording (Rankin, 1995: Pickard, 1996; Perry, 1998). The low take-up of NVQ's has also been attributed to the inappropriateness of this type of training in relation to small business ownership (Littlefield, 1994; Antonacopoulou & Fitzgerald, 1996), even though research shows that small business managers often lack the

framework and language for competence based training (Thomson, 1992). However since the introduction of these awards over a decade ago the NVQ system of training has broadened in scope (www.is4profit.com/business=advice/employment/nvqs, 2007). Although the majority of NVQs are still primarily concerned with the development of key skills and competences (www.dfes.gov.uk/section96, 2007), more attention is now paid to the alternative uses for NVQs. For example many businesses use the standards for training needs analysis; the design, delivery and evaluation of training; preparing recruitment specifications; career development and succession planning and continuously assessing and appraising performance (www.is4profit.com/business=advice/employment/nvqs, 2007).

3.4. Informal Training

As it has been found that small business owners learn more quickly through practical experience (Hines & Thorpe, 1995; Eraut et al., 1998; Skule et al., 2002; Zambarlouskos & Constantelou, 2002) the role of informal training is evidently important.

It can be difficult to define precisely where the line should be drawn to distinguish informal training from formal learning. Whilst formal learning is often perceived as being highly structured and largely classroom based (Marsick & Watkins, 1990) informal training tends to be situational and unstructured where control of the learning rests primarily with the learner. However Hager (1998) makes the distinction between formal and informal learning on the basis of a number of factors, namely that formal learning is intentional whilst informal learning is not. He also argues that informal learning has no specific curriculum or prescribed outcomes. Informal learning is therefore less predictable than formal learning. Hager further suggests that informal

learning is often tacit where the learner is rarely required to articulate what they have learned. Drawing attention to the close association between informal learning and the acquisition of tacit knowledge, he also suggests that informal learning is rarely concerned with the front-end model of theory and practice.

Clearly it is extremely difficult to produce a definition of informal training that can be applied to all situations. Hager (1998) therefore bases his definition on intentionality. However this does not apply in all cases as incidental learning can occur in informal and formal learning contexts. Informal learning may also be purposive as is the case when an individual sets out to learn a new skill, even though this is generally associated with formal learning. Similarly collaborative learning may occur in both learning contexts and methods albeit in varying degrees. In addition to the problems associated with definition, care also has to be taken to avoid confusing training with learning even though these are very different. For example Marsick & Watkins (1990) tend to perceive training as: *'...short term activities that emphasise practical skills immediately applicable to the job...'* (p.4). Reynolds et al., (2002) adopt a similar stance where training is viewed as a process that facilitates learning; this being one of the many ways that an individuals can construct and develop new skills, knowledge and abilities.

In the past there has been a tendency to neglect informal training (e.g. Jones & Goss, 1991; Cambridge SBRC, 1992; Goss & Jones 1992). However informal training within the workplace increasingly forms an integral part of ongoing, lifelong learning in the majority of countries (European Commission, 2001; OECD, 2003). The focus on informal learning is however a recent phenomenon, public policy debate having shifted its attention from formal education and training to the type of learning that is 'lifewide' (Cheallaigh, 2001). As businesses have also started to create strategies that use informal

methods of learning, a great deal of emphasis is now being placed on experiential and self directed learning (Dehnbostel & Dybowski, 2001). There are however several reasons why informal training has received relatively little attention in the past (Curran et al., 1995). For example, it is much simpler to measure formal training and its effects than it is informal training because formal training is very specific. Also, the research tools employed to measure training effort can be misleading when applied to small firms (obtaining data on the number of people trained etc.) because it is difficult to include any informal systems that may be in operation (Johnson & Gubbins, 1992). Compounding these problems is the way policy evaluation tends to prefer quantitative research approaches, particularly in cases where sponsors are looking to meet specific targets. However the most difficult problem is overcoming the widespread assumption that informal training is inferior to formal training, even though these claims are largely unsubstantiated (Curran et al., 1995; Barber, 2004).

This relatively recent focus on informal learning is mainly the result of research, which strongly suggests that informal learning is the most significant way of acquiring the skills and competences required at work (Skule & Reichborn, 2002; Zambarlouskous & Constantelous, 2002; Skule et al., 2002). It has also been suggested that '*...learning from other people and the challenge of work itself...are often the most important dimensions of the learning process*' (Eraut et al, 1998: 37). In addition to the problems associated with measuring the effectiveness of informal training, it may also be difficult to assess the conditions that are conducive to this type of learning. This is mainly because the methods available are too primitive (Skule, 2004). Looking at the instruments that are frequently used by policy makers and organisations, there is a significant gap between the broad view of informal learning and the types of learning that are actually measured. Numerous studies of continuous learning together with the

methods developed to measure intellectual capital focus mainly on formal training and education with little or no attention being paid to informal learning (Skule, 2004).

An example that illustrates this is the research conducted by Eurostat (2003), which examined lifelong learning. Although the aim of the research was to collect information on the various aspects of lifelong learning in European countries, most of the questions posed were related to the uptake of formal training. On this occasion informal training was restricted to one single question that looked to determine the amount of learning that took place through the use of libraries and other methods of self-study. It was therefore impossible to determine the frequency and/or quality of informal learning in the workplace. As Eurostat measured learning through participation rates, any informal learning that took place was excluded. However this particular approach and the problems it incurs is not uncommon. For instance, one of the most frequently used guidelines for measuring intellectual capital is the Meritum Guidelines which focus on the number of hours spent training, training expenditure, and the level of education amongst employees (Nordic Industrial Fund, 2001). Process oriented frameworks such as that used in the Investors in People standard are also biased towards formal training and education.

The lack of indicators to measure informal training is reflected in the gaps that exist in current theories of workplace learning. However the last ten years has witnessed a significant shift in the way learning is conceptualised. Although situational learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991), informal learning (Eraut et al., 2000) and contextual learning have received particular attention, it is extremely difficult to find a reliable means of translating these types of learning into indicators for measuring the quality of the learning environment. However a number of factors have recently been identified that

facilitate learning in the specific contexts examined. For example it has been shown that task variation, working as part of a temporary group, being provided with an opportunity to obtain the advice of experts; changes in duties and work roles are likely to stimulate learning (Eraut et al., 2000). Strategies and incentives for sharing and imparting knowledge are also conducive to learning as is job mobility and jobs that provide the worker with independence and responsibility (Marsick & Watkins, 1999).

Although these findings are clearly significant, it should nevertheless be noted that the majority of these studies are qualitative and were conducted within one particular organisation or industry. The theoretical frameworks that have been developed are therefore *'...short of generalised conceptualisation of the contextual and organisational factors that promote or impede learning at work...'* (Skule, 2004: 10). However informal training and learning clearly cannot be measured against indicators that are used to assess formal training and education namely training hours, participation rates and the level of the qualification obtained.

3.5. Tacit Skills

Looking at the merits of informal training and its role within the small firms sector, Abbott (1993) argues that this is the only way OM's are able to develop tacit skills, namely the often unconscious and habitual skills which are learnt in the workplace through close familiarity with machines/work practices (Jary & Jary, 1999; Evans et al., 2004). The development of tacit skills is therefore due to the fact that informal training is closely associated with the development of the type of knowledge that is acquired from everyday experiences that form a framework of understanding (Polanyi, 1967; Marsick, and Watkins 1990). Many researchers therefore perceive tacit knowledge as evolving from activity and the effort required to produce it (Barber, 2004) although

these two terms clearly cover a wide range of situations and contexts. It is nevertheless agreed that this type of knowledge is acquired through personal experience rather than instruction and tuition. Although tacit knowledge is difficult to define precisely Hager (1998) suggests that this type of knowledge is a knowledge that cannot be physically defined due to the elements it contains namely craft secrets, intuitive knowledge and knowledge that may be difficult to explain. Schon (1983) suggests that action-based learning assists the acquisition of tacit knowledge and skills. However tacit knowledge can act as a barrier towards problem solving as many of the factors that bias judgement are contained within this sphere. Unless care is taken, difficulties could arise when attempts are made to transfer this knowledge or skill to another person (Barber, 2004). Tacit knowledge must therefore be made explicit if it is to be shared or used in problem-solving situations (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986).

Evans et al., (2004) draw attention to the way tacit skills are often perceived as the basis for '*occupational mobility*' (p.230), which may not be the case. With recourse to Engestrom, (1994, 2001), they argue that although people do take skills and experiences with them into new occupations it is the whole activity systems that count. Evans et al., therefore suggest that although previously acquired skills often become an integral part of a learning process when they are deployed and developed in a new learning situation, the actual use of tacit skills is situation specific. What may lead to success in one context may therefore be of little use in another.

As tacit skills clearly relate to the precise way in which tasks are executed within a specific workplace, they can only be learned through experience within that particular environment. Informal on-the-job training is therefore an extremely important aspect of learning in small firms (Atkinson & Meager, 1994; Hendry et al. 1995). For example

Atkinson & Meager draw attention to the way small firms spread their skills throughout the workforce, whereas larger organisations tend to focus on the development of individuals skills. Small firms are also likely to possess a core of specialist workers who are able to impart knowledge and educate others by helping to resolve specific problems as they occur.

3.6. The Strengths and Weaknesses Inherent Within Informal Training

Although informal training and learning may be essential to the development of tacit knowledge it is from here that the main disadvantages of informal learning stem (Barber, 2004). In his study of auto mechanics in India it was shown that although informal training showed a great deal of potential the mechanics often experienced difficulties in regards to the identification and diagnosis of problems. Problem-solving when faced with new situations and events also caused the workers difficulties. As a result the work was often substandard and unsatisfactory. A lack of formal guidance also caused the workers to experience difficulties when trying to adapt to new tools and machinery.

However Barber observed that this type of training allowed the mechanics to develop a high level of innovation and enabled them to work under difficult conditions. They also acquired social skills to suit the workplace conditions and developed practical skills that suited their limited tools.

Looking at the wider view of informal training Barber draws attention to the accessibility of informal training and its freedom from bureaucratic control. He also argues that this type of training is open to everyone as it has no set criteria for acceptance. It is therefore concluded that the success of informal training rests mainly

on the desire to learn and build new skills, the desire to be employed within a particular capacity and a willingness to interact effectively with fellow workers. This concept helps to explain why informal training is so popular within small firms, the desire to own or start a successful business within a particular industry being a key motivator for this type of training. The fact that informal training takes place frequently in small firms (Curran et al., 1993; Abbott, 1993) tends to underscore this point.

Other benefits that may be afforded by informal training are highlighted by Curran et al., (1995), who draw attention to the flexibility, cost-effectiveness and appropriateness of informal training activities, which also do not require workers to leave the working environment. This particular point is significant as it is often argued that training which takes place outside the workplace is the main contributory factor of the diseconomies of training in small firms (Blackburn & Hankinson, 1989; Cambridge SBRC 1992; Abbott, 1993).

3.7. The Relationship Between Training and Learning

Even if it were possible to provide training programmes that suited everybody, the degree of actual learning that would take place is questionable, as training does not automatically lead to learning (Antonacopoulou, 2001). Antonacopoulou also argues that learning does not always prove to be an integral part of training, especially if an organisation is unable to provide the infrastructure required to support the learning after training has been completed. She goes on to suggest that rather than presenting an overview of training and learning from the organisations perspective; the focus should be shifted towards the individuals' point of view. Having completed a longitudinal study of managers from three retail banks, Antonacopoulou found that an individuals' perception of training is a unique one, which often lies in complete contrast with that of

the organisation. She goes on to remark that there are a variety of reasons why training may not result in learning including historical and cultural factors, which are key determinants in managers' perceptions of the training and learning process. Her findings also revealed other significant factors that help to explain why formal training is not always effective. For example each person holds different expectations from training, which often makes it difficult for them to utilise the knowledge gained. This is frequently due to the training being perceived as inappropriate and/or irrelevant to their job or the training was not provided in the correct manner within the proper environment. Structured training may also fail to contribute to the learning process because of the proactive response required to accommodate the rate of change. As the current relationship between training and learning fails to provide this, problems often arise. It has also been found that many formal training programmes are either provided too late, or the skills developed are insufficient to support the continuous learning that is taking place. Although the relationship between training and learning tends to be more evident when individuals are looking to address organisational priorities (Antonacopoulou, 2001), this questionable relationship could help explain why many small business owners are generally averse to management training Tait (1990). For example research conducted by Kirby (1991) found that start-up training was taken by less than a quarter of new firms. Similarly a study conducted by Barclays (1994) showed that just 27% of business owners undertake any form of training prior to start-up, even though the skills required are unlikely to have been developed in previous occupations. The study also revealed that when training is taken it is more likely to be technical than managerial. More recent research suggests that the situation has changed little over the past decade. For example, the findings of a study conducted by NatWest (2000a), showed that just 20% of those embarking on new ventures had undertaken training.

3.8. Entrepreneurial Learning

Small firm owners develop a number of managerial skills from specific situations that occur within the workplace. To discover how this is brought about, it is necessary to examine the way these various occurrences act as 'learning events' (Cope, 2003). There is a general consensus that entrepreneurs are largely governed by specific actions; thus supporting the theory that most of their learning is experiential (Rae & Carswell, 2000). This 'learning-by-doing' principle allows OM's to gain practical experience through problem solving, discovery and basic trial and error (Young & Sexton, 1997; Deakins & Freel, 1998). However, these processes may be applied to a wide range of situations and contexts, as gaining knowledge through experience is an important aspect of all learning (Boud et al., 1993). For example it has been suggested by Canter (1994) that criminals, such as serial killers are often difficult to catch, because their effectiveness increases through what has been learnt from past mistakes. It is this process of 'cognitive development', that allows these individuals to devise plans for crimes *'...principles and procedures being developed by the offender to make his/her objectives more achievable...'* (p297).

Small firm owners clearly have access to a wide range of people and situations from whom they can learn. Most of this occurs through the applied behaviour of these individuals: copying, experimentation and opportunism being three prime examples (Gibb, 1997). This type of learning is particularly important when applied to small business ownership as there is evidence which suggests that entrepreneurs should build knowledge reservoirs, segmented into internal, semi-internal and external knowledge pools (Widding, 2005).

Deakins & Freel, (1998) suggest that:

'Entrepreneurship and the growth process is essentially non-linear and discontinuous. It is a process that is characterised by significant and critical learning events. The ability of entrepreneurs to maximise knowledge as a result of experiencing these learning events will determine how successful their firm eventually becomes' (p. 153).

To explore this particular concept further it is necessary to examine what Mezirow (1990, 1991:193) describes as 'transformative' learning, which *'...involves a sequence of learning events that begins with disorientating dilemma and concludes with a changed self-concept that enables a reintegration into ones life context...'*

This concept is derived from the way 'higher-level' learning (described in detail on the following pages) is triggered by a discontinuous event, namely an incident that occurs unexpectedly and/or a crisis. This *'perspective transformation'* is largely the result of existing knowledge, which may be ineffectual at dealing with the present crisis *'... acting as a catalyst for critical reflection and transformations ...'* (Mezirow, 1990 p.14). These 'trigger events' (crises) can be the result of personal error (a self imposed crisis) or a situation that has been brought about by external factors and influences.

Whilst investigating entrepreneurial learning and critical reflection Cope (2003), found that mistakes made by the entrepreneur often provoked a discontinuous event that had an impact on the organisation as a whole. This tends to support Mezirow's (1991) argument that crises are *'... powerful stimulants of transformative learning ...'* (p.441). Looking to establish how higher-level learning occurs from a process perspective, Cope (2003) draws attention to the 'critical dimension' contained within transformative (and double-loop) learning outcomes that are triggered by a discontinuous event. These outcomes are linked with the result of 'critical reflection', which examines the reasons

for performing a particular action and the consequences arising from it. Critical reflection may therefore be described as '*Reassessing the way we have posed problems and reassessing our own orientation to perceiving, knowing, believing, feeling and acting*' (Mezirow, 1990: 13).

In addition to the influence of specific events and situations, OMs also learn through constant practical application. Skill development is therefore an ongoing process that takes place continually as they learn to manage their business (Hines & Thorpe, 1995). Moreover regular routine and the performance of habitual tasks are recognised as key learning facilitators (Costello, 1996). Although the learning process is continuous and on-going (Mumford, 1991) the inevitable challenge brought about by the need to solve specific problems also makes this a rich source of learning (Daudelin, 1996; Kleiner & Roth, 1997). The benefits are therefore two-fold. Firstly there is the learning that takes place from the situation/event as it stands and secondly there is the learning that occurs as a result of its 'transformational' qualities (Applebaum & Goransson, 1997) where individuals are able to deal effectively with non-routine situations. It has been observed that learned responses and customary ways of behaviour are rarely of use when a singular, more isolated incident occurs (Marsick & Watkins, 1990). Discontinuous learning events can stimulate different 'levels' of learning. For example Fiol & Lyles, (1985) argue that hitting a crisis is essential if challenging and fundamental forms of learning are to take place (i.e. 'higher level' learning). Fiol & Lyles go on to explain that crises that occur unexpectedly, which produce both shock and surprise are necessary '*... for unlearning, new higher-level learning and re-adaptation to take place* (p.808).

To understand how 'lower-level' learning differs from 'higher-level learning, Fiol & Lyles (1985) provide the following definitions:

Lower-level learning: Focused learning that may be mere repetition of past behaviours - usually short term, surface temporary but with associations being formed. Captures only a certain element... Single loop, routine level

Higher-Level learning: The development of complex rules and associations regarding new actions. Development of an understanding of causation... Double-loop learning. Central norms, frames of reference and assumptions changed (Fiol & Lyles, 1985: 810) These definitions encapsulate many of the distinctions advanced by other theorists (Table 3.2).

Higher -level learning also has the ability to question and/or redefine individuals 'mental models' (Appelbaum & Goransson, 1997). Also referred to as 'theories for action' (Argyris & Schon, 1978), these 'mental models' tend to symbolize a representation '*... of an individuals perception of the world which includes knowledge, beliefs and experiences as well as their implicit and explicit understandings ...*' (Cope, 2003: 433). The 'meaning perspectives' described by Mezirow (1991) mirror these mental models both in context and definition as they depict both perceptual and conceptual frameworks that '*... form limit and distort how we think, feel and believe... how, why and what we learn...*' (p.34).

The recognition of cross-situational significance, particularly in regards to applicability and transferability is what segregates higher-level from lower-level learning. It may therefore be concluded that discontinuous events are important elements of

entrepreneurial learning, as these often precipitate the implementation of a particular action.

Contributing Theorists	Lower-level learning	Higher-level learning
Appelbaum and Goransson (1997)	'Adaptive learning involves more mundane, everyday, incremental learning	'Transformational Learning involves radical change; learning that requires a shift in 'mindset
Gibb (1995)	Learning in order to cope change and survive	Learning that involves the capacity to 'bring forward' experience
Huber (1991)	Learning within a 'frame of reference'	learning a new 'frame of reference
Mezirow (1990,	'Instrumental' learning is involved in task-orientated problem solving - how to do something or how to perform. Regards developing an understanding of the procedural assumptions guiding the problem-solving process	'Transformative' learning has the capacity to transform an individual's 'meaning perspectives' - perceptual and conceptual frameworks that form limit and distort how individuals think, believe, feel and what when and why they learn
Senge (1990)	'Adaptive' learning involves coping with the current environment in new and better ways (cited in Sadler-Smith et al., 1999)*	'Generative' learning moves beyond adaptation, requiring individuals and organisations to develop new ways of looking at the world (cited in Sadler-Smith et al., 1999)
Fiol and Lyles (1985)	Occurs through repetition and routine, short-term outcomes	Has long-term effects; more of a cognitive process that involves skill development and new insights
Argyris and Schon (1978)	'Single-loop' learning regards routine, immediate tasks	'Double-loop learning regards the questioning of underlying values which guide action; implies an awareness of long-range outcomes
Pask (1976)	'Serialist' strategy involves detailed, step-by-step approach from one idea to the next without necessarily considering the whole picture	'Wholist' strategy involves in relation to the whole

NB * for the purposes of this table, Sadler-Smith et al. (1999) are cited here as they provide useful and succinct definitions of adaptive and generative learning that are not clearly apparent in Senge's (1990) original work.

Source: Cope (2003)

Table 3.2. - Distinguishing features of lower and higher-level learning

Significantly it has been shown that network interaction during discontinuous events stimulates the higher-level learning process (Taylor & Thorpe, 2000). Research conducted by Sullivan (2000) showed that use of mentors is also likely to facilitate higher-level learning from critical incidents.

3.9. The Impact of OM Learning on Small Firm Performance

The way OMs learn has a direct impact on business performance and growth (Chaston et al., 2001), the success of a firm being heavily dependent on the ability to '*... further develop core competences...*' (p.141). It is argued that organisations need to utilise this learning process in order to develop the managerial skills that are often perceived as the key to competitiveness and growth (Hamel & Prahalad, 1993; Pennings et al., 1994). Huber (1991) and Nonaka (1994) suggest that this lies mainly in the ability to utilise new sources of information effectively. It is this process that allows an organisation to move forward to an innovative dimension that will enable it to respond to changing markets and take advantage of the opportunities that emerge. It has been suggested that small firms are often limited by the scope of their learning, as this tends to rely on the utilisation of existing knowledge and experience (i.e. lower-level learning) for improvement and modification. However this type of learning may be appropriate within industries that are production-orientated, who operate in relatively stable markets (Chaston et al., 2001). By contrast where market conditions are subject to constant change and competitiveness is essential, higher-level learning is more effective (Nevis et al., 1995).

This is clearly evident in the higher-level learning strategies adopted by growth-orientated firms whereas those that do not wish to grow tend to focus on lower-level learning. Although the type of learning that takes place is clearly significant, the speed

at which skills are acquired may be equally important, particularly in regards to taking over existing enterprises where individuals clearly need to learn a great deal very rapidly (Paton, 2004). Looking specifically at the purchase of franchises, Patton suggests that this is one of the main factors that distinguish start-ups from take-overs. Emphasising the need to recognise this difference he highlights the importance of specialised training, which he argues is the most effective approach to rapid learning. Those purchasing private going concerns may therefore be faced with a similar challenge where the ability to sustain performance levels will largely depend on the speed at which skills can be learned and applied.

3.10. Sources of Support and Training Provision

A growth of interest in the economic contribution of small businesses and enterprise has been accompanied by an increase in the level of public sector policy initiatives at local, regional and national level to support the development of this sector (Laukkanen, 2000; Westhead et al., 2001). There are therefore a number of support networks that offer support and assistance to small firms. These facilities range from formal training programmes to general business advice (Bennett & Robson, 2003).

Public sector support has been available for nearly four decades, the need for this facility having been established by the Bolton Report in 1971 (Bolton, 1971). Although the committee concluded that positive discrimination in favour of small firms was not justified, it was nevertheless argued that some aspects of government legislation had a negative effect on the small business sector (Bolton, 1971). Immediate action was therefore taken, which led to the formation of the Small Firms Division, within the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), who were also responsible for the development of practical policy (Coventry, 1975). Subsequent governments have also

made a conscious effort to remove many of the burdens that restrict the growth of small-firms. For example the 1970 – 1974 Conservative government focused less upon structural solutions and more upon reliance and competitiveness (Sampson, 1983). However, political and social considerations forced them and the successive Labour government to direct substantial assistance towards large organisations. It was not until 1979 when the Conservatives returned to office that significant changes were brought about to encourage the development of small firms. However prior to 1988, the most important schemes were those provided by the Manpower Services Commission and its successor, The Training Agency. These services included the Loan Guarantee Scheme (1981) and the Enterprise Allowance Scheme (1982), which was coupled with various training programmes including the Business Enterprise Programme, the Business Enterprise Scheme and the Small Firms Service (Lean, 1996).

By 1983 the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) were able to list approximately 100 small business support initiatives (DTI, 1983): a figure that has continued to grow annually (Curran & Blackburn, 2000). Various schemes were also introduced through the Department of Trade & Industry's 'Enterprise Initiative' (1988), including the Consultancy Initiative, the Small Firms Merit Award for Research and Technology and Support for Products Under Research Scheme. Notably in 1988 government policy towards small firms changed significantly when proposals were announced for a network of Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) (Meager, 1991). The first of these were formed in 1990, following the government's white paper 'Employment in the 1990's' which outlined the various functions TECs were required to perform. This included the drawing up of Local Labour Market Assessments, the management of various training programmes and working as

'... a local forum and agent for change, building relationships between key interest groups and investing public and private resources to enhance the economic vitality of the community and the well-being of its citizens' (DTI, 1988)

The planning and administration of the Enterprise Allowance Scheme also became the responsibility of TECs, although delivery of these programmes was subcontracted to local providers. Significantly this particular approach to support provision resembles the type of central contracted agency favoured by Johnson (1992) who argued that support networks should provide an institutional framework for a diverse range of services. He also suggested that these services should be available through private and public sector partnerships via a 'one stop shop'. Other features of TEC's reflect the recommendations put forward by Segal Quince Wickstead Ltd. (1988) who felt that single standard support programmes were too restrictive, as different types of business require different types of courses. However Deakins (1993) felt that TECs had much to contribute, as they were able to facilitate a more formalised network between agencies whilst still retaining flexibility in meeting local needs.

Despite the benefits afforded by TECs some people remained sceptical. For example Meager (1991), argued that the current interests of local employers were likely to take precedence over future local development needs in an employer-led organisation. Moreover it was suggested that significant cuts in funding also affected TECs, as they were less able to meet their commitments to individual skill development and assisting the unemployed (Peck & Emmerich 1993). As voluntary private investment had not been successful in filling this funding gap, demands were therefore made for a 'national training levy'. Peck & Emmerick also argued that performance would improve significantly if decisions were made at regional level, a view which was supported by

Bachtler et al., (1993) who claimed that development needs are also better addressed at this level. Despite the controversy surrounding TECs, Howell (1995) nevertheless argued that much of the widespread criticism was based on opinion. A Coopers & Lybrand report published in conjunction with DTI (1994) supported this argument, stating that TECs had made a significant impact in small firms. The report therefore concluded that much had been achieved by way of improvements and innovation, although significantly no evidence was provided to support this claim. However Curran (1993) argued that the TECs often displayed a reluctance to amend their pre-packaged schemes even though these were generally unpopular amongst small firm owners. He therefore suggested that support should be aimed towards specific areas through direct contact with trade associations and industrial training providers. The report nevertheless commended those who developed a more positive approach towards support provision although the effectiveness of one-stop-shops remained arguable. The findings produced by the National Federation of Enterprise Agencies (NFEA) (1995) also suggested that these support networks had accomplished a great deal. Out of the 700 OMs polled, over 60% ranked them as the top single source of advice and support for business start-ups, whilst 55% claimed that starting their own business would have been adversely affected without the support and advice that was available. Following the implementation of various changes, TECs and LECs claimed that they were better equipped to assist small firms particularly as a significant shift had been made from being government orientated to being run by business people (Vickerstaff & Parker, 1995).

The promotion of Management Training and Development (MTD) was also the responsibility of TECs/LECs (Boocock et al., 1998). Although their initial intention was to encourage the creation of new enterprises and persuade local firms to invest in

low-level training, a shift in priorities resulted in the focus being directed towards enterprise (Barnes, 1992). During this time Business Links were introduced, which complimented TECs by offering a simple framework of support to small businesses on a nationwide level (DTI, 1994).

One of the main challenges facing TECs was that of assessing the needs of local SMEs and producing solutions that were capable of being implemented (MCI, 1996). However there were problems concerning supply and demand. On the supply side, TECs were often criticised for the way they churned and replicated existing initiatives and for continuing to offer programmes that were centrally driven. Support providers were therefore urged to modify their service to meet the needs of SMEs (Coopers & Lybrand/DTI, 1994). Bennett et al., (1994) also argued that TECs needed to become more proactive towards SMEs generally. Notably some of the problems concerning supply were linked to the SMEs themselves, who often have a negative perception of management development and training (Vickerstaff & Parker, 1995). However the introduction of Personal Business Advisors (PBAs) through the Business Links has done much to alleviate this. An approach that has proved popular and effective in addressing the individual needs of OM's, this particular service has also encouraged the take-up of assistance (Bryson et al, 1997). Some writers nevertheless remained sceptical due to the varying standards of support provision across the Business Link network (Bank of England, 1998).

In regards to demand, there are several obstacles that deter SMEs from taking advantage of the support facilities on offer. Firstly there is the question of prioritisation, as small firm owners tend to focus on operational issues rather than those involving strategy (Watkins, 1982). The impact of any training undertaken may therefore not

affect the company's performance until later (ISS Research, 1991; Johnson & Gubbins 1992). There is also the question of finance as SMEs rarely set aside resources for training, this often being perceived as an additional, unnecessary expense (Marshall et al., 1995).

Although public sector support provision tends to focus on new enterprises (Curran et al., 1995; Curran & Blackburn, 2000), OMs of established businesses were able to take advantage of the Business Growth Training (BGT) Option 3, which was one of the longest running training policies for established small firms. Administered by the TECs, SMEs with 25 - 500 employees were able to obtain financial assistance for the purpose of engaging business consultants to help them develop management skills and prepare for the future. Looking to determine the impact of Option 3, Marshall et al., (1993) found that whilst the scheme had a significant effect on the overall quality of training in the participating businesses, its influence on the firm's performance was arguable. Marshall et al. also found that the majority of those who participated in the initiative were larger established businesses. However it is argued that the low take-up amongst smaller enterprises could be attributable to the fact that many small firms were not aware that the BGT initiative existed (Vickerstaff, 1992; Stanworth et al., 1992).

By contrast Business Links aim to accommodate all types of small business and provide wide range of services and facilities for this purpose (Devon & Cornwall Business Link, 1996). The main considerations of this particular network therefore includes business planning and growth; raising capital; design, innovation and technology; exporting, EU legislation, new market information; patents, licences, copyright; managing finance, VAT and tax; training schemes; legislation and establishing contact with 'business angels'.

Supported with £100m of government money, this organisation offered advice and assistance to approximately 3000 companies every week. However like TECs, Business Links have also been criticised. For example Bennett (1995) argued that government intervention often has a negative effect on these networks. Mendham (1996) also suggested that Business links were likely to fail because OM's are often wary of asking advice from the very people who have the power to prosecute them. He therefore suggests that an anonymous telephone service akin to one provided by the Small Firms Service of yesteryear would be far more effective as it allows people to ask exactly what they like without fear of reprisal. Page (1996) however repudiated these criticisms of Business Link, stating that government intervention remained minimal. He further suggested that to prevent deficiencies, the scheme had an independent monitoring system that had recently indicated a '*...high satisfaction quotient...*' (p.68). It was also anticipated that within three years of opening, all Business Links would be independently assessed against rigorous accreditation criteria (ISO 9000) based on standards of customer service. As a result, only those who were able to meet these standards would remain part of the Business Link network (DTI, 1995). Ten years later Business Link's strategy has shifted slightly, the main objective being to offer practical advice to small businesses (www.businesslink.gov.uk, 2007). Their key areas for advice and support are therefore finance and grants; health and safety; IT and e-commerce; international trade; tax returns and payroll; employing people; starting a business and exploiting new ideas. Assistance is also available in regards to selling/buying a business and growing a business. Recognising that different types of businesses have different support needs, Business link also provides advice that is particular to specific types of businesses.

With regards to skill development and training Business Link also support the Learning Skills Council (LSC), which '*...is responsible for planning and funding high-quality vocational education and training for everyone...*' (LSC, 2007: 1). The aim of the LSC is therefore '*...to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards...*' (LSC, 2007: 1). To achieve this objective National Skills Academies and Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) were set up to help improve and develop skills for employers that are needed to underpin business success and competitiveness. However since the CoVEs programme was launched in 2001 various changes have taken place in order to improve its efficiency. For example in 2005 the Agenda for Change document was produced which outlined the next stage of the programme, which focused on employer responsiveness through the introduction of the Quality Mark for employers. In 2006 the Quality Mark development was combined with the re-accreditation of the CoVE programme to create a 'new standard' for employer responsiveness and vocational excellence. Developed throughout 2006 in conjunction with employers, sector skills councils and the help of sixty-eight CoVE and non-CoVE providers, the development work was completed at the beginning of 2007 and was available from June 2007.

Included amongst the various government schemes to help small firms is the 'Transitional Rate-Relief Scheme', which aims to prevent UBR poundage rising above inflation. To facilitate this, a total of £603m was allocated in 1995/96 to help finance the limit on rate increases ('Budget Measures For Small Businesses' 1994). However, business rates continue to give cause for concern particularly amongst small retailers who often bear the brunt of these costs (SBS, 2006)

To assist with the cost of training, the Department of Education and Employment introduced a scheme entitled 'Small Firms Training Loans' (1994), which allowed small businesses employing fifty people or less to defer repayments on bank-loans taken out for this purpose. Loans could also be used to cover the costs of hiring business consultants to assist with the drawing up of training plans (Nat. West, 1996). During this period amendments were also made to the 'Small Firms Loan Guarantee Scheme', which was designed to benefit firms in the service industry and provide assistance for very small (micro) firms. However more recent changes to this particular scheme means that firms that have been trading over five years will no longer be eligible for loan guarantees even though the scheme has assisted many mature businesses in the past (Hussey, 2005).

In 1995 the Government announced its intention to invest £200m in support provision over the next four years. These proposals were set out in the publication 'Helping Small Firms' which was produced in conjunction with the governments second Competitive White Paper, 'Forging Ahead'. This document highlights specific areas in need of attention and the performance of small firms generally (DTI, 1995). The labour party also designed a strategy to assist small businesses that included the introduction of a statutory right to interest from large firms who fail to pay suppliers on time. However many small business organisations felt these proposals were anecdotal, the main objective being to secure five million business votes.

In addition to the providing finance, many high-street banks also offer a back-up advisory service to assist small firms during the early stages of development. This particular source of support is one of the most popular amongst small-business owners, even though other organisations, for example Business Link, are often better equipped

to deal with their needs (Barclays, 1994). During this period NatWest extended their range of support provision to include several new pilot schemes including 'The Norfolk Small Business Initiative' which was set up to address the reasons for small business failure. However the most important feature during this period was the setting up of an Angels Service to help informal investors identify investment opportunities; the funding from this sector being two and a half times the amount provided by venture capital institutions (NatWest, 1995).

More recent attempts to deliver effective support to small firms includes the Small Business Service (SBS), which is a centralised initiative set up as a network of 'Next Steps Agencies'. In 2002, the government set out a new policy framework for a government-wide approach to helping small firms (SBS, 2002) which they claimed would make the UK the best place in the world to start and grow a business (SBS 2006) and to deliver '*...Government and other executive functions in a more efficient way ...*' (DTI 1999a: 13). In addition to encouraging start-ups the government also wanted to provide help and support to those who wanted to develop a business. However they also aimed to bring into existence a support business environment where small firms would be able to respond to government and access its services more effectively. To deliver this vision the SBS drew on the knowledge of others namely the Small Business Council (SBC), the Ethnic Minority Business Forum (EMBF), the Small Business Investment Taskforce (SBIT), and Capital for Enterprise Abroad. It also worked closely with membership-based organisations including the Federation of Small Businesses, the Institute of Directors, the British Chamber of Commerce and the Social Enterprise Coalition.

Having identified a number of specific themes that would act as key drivers for economic growth, improved productivity and a wider involvement in enterprise for all, the governments main objectives were to build an enterprise culture that would encourage a more dynamic start-up market; increase the potential for small business growth; improve access to finance for small firms; encourage more enterprise in disadvantaged communities and under represented groups; improve small business experience of government services and to formulate better regulations and policy. To develop these themes into national strategies, the SBS worked alongside other government departments and partners at national, regional and local levels.

However two years later the Government Action Plan for Small Businesses was launched which marshals the whole of government behind the small business agenda (DTI, 2004). Endorsed by the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, the action plan means that the SBS collate evidence and analyse the needs of small firms. The plan also encourages the government to focus on small enterprises in policy making and facilitates the effective delivery of services from government at national, regional and local levels. More recent additions to the services provided by the SBS include a Small Firms Consultant Database that aims to help shape future regulations that take into account the needs of small firms. Similarly small firm owners are encouraged to provide evidence on how the operation of the Community Investment Tax Relief (CITR) and other initiatives might be improved (www.sbs.gov.uk, 2007). To improve the overall effectiveness of support provision the SBS is currently leading the cross-government Business Support Simplification Programme to make it easier for businesses to access support and enable the government to ensure that support is value for money (DTI, 2007). The main objectives of the programme are therefore to increase the ease of use, effectiveness and

efficiency of government support to business. Having discovered that the plethora of schemes available often confuses firms and leaves them unsure of where to go for help, the programme also aims to offer businesses (1) fewer schemes and organisations to navigate; (2) clear, coherent branding; (3) support that is better value for taxpayers and (4) support that is shown to help business through effective monitoring. The DTI also claim that by building a partnership of central and local government, the Regional Development Agencies and Business, a real difference will be made to communities and the economy as whole.

There are also a number of organisations in the private sector that offer help to small firms including the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) who provide numerous facilities including a legal advisory scheme, legal fees insurance and a twenty-four hour 'Hotline' for, tax and legal advice (Emmins, 1996). Currently the FSB provides a wide range of facilities including financial services, insurance services, a legal hotline and a support service that specialises in start-ups (www.fbs.org.uk, 2007). Members of the FSB also have access to a customer service department, which is designed to help them gain the maximum benefit from their membership. The 'Small Business Bureau' (SBB) support small firms in similar ways. However this particular organisation also provides special facilities for businesswomen. Introduced in 1985 'Women into Business' aimed to raise the profile of successful businesswomen and give them increased recognition for their achievements and contribution to the economy (SBB, 1996). Further assistance was offered by way of a counselling service run by established businesswomen for their less experienced counterparts. Currently the SBB continues to support women in business as well as providing to a number of services that aim to help small firms (www.smallbusinessbureau.org.uk, 2007)

3.11. The Role of Accountants as Support Providers

There is also evidence, which shows that accountants are a popular source of external advice. For example research conducted by Atkinson (1994) and Curran & Blackburn (1994) that examined the uptake of support provision amongst small firms revealed that accountants were the most frequently used single source of advice. Evidence also exists which suggests that accountants are more popular than the personal business advisors (PBAs) that work in conjunction with government support agencies (Bennett, 1995; Agar & Moran, 1995; Nordhaug & Gooderham, 1996; Bryson et al., 1997; Mole, 2002; Gooderham et al., 2004).

Examining the reasons why accountants are a popular source of advice Bennett (1995) suggests that the PBAs that work with organisations such as Business Link tend to act as facilitators who inform OM's where specialist advice can be obtained. He also argues that the advice provided by PBAs is often generic rather than specialist, even though the building of long-term relationships is encouraged in order to promote ongoing development.

Although the popularity of accountants is often attributed to the compulsory elements that are contained within the relationship they have with their clients (Kirby & King, 1997), Marriot & Marriot (2000) and Nordhaug (2000) claim that the longevity of the association provides enormous potential for the development of intimacy and trust. It is this particular element that forms the basis of the relational competence that is frequently associated with accountants (Gooderham & Norhaug, 2000) and leads small firm owners to regard them as an integral part of the business (Gooderham et al., 2004).

These findings are also supportive of the arguments put forward by Kvitastein (1997) and Wilks (2000) who claim that OM's are unlikely to become motivated into adopting and integrating key skills and competences if the business advisor they employ is unable to establish a high degree of relational competence. This argument is underscored by the fact that small firm owners need to recognise the benefits that can be afforded by establishing this type of relationship. This particular attribute also helps to explain why accountants are an excellent source of learning (O'Farrell & Moffat, 1995; Gibb, 1997).

By contrast Gibb (2000) suggests that the general advice provided by professionals such as accountants and bank managers is largely incidental and therefore biased towards the use of their particular services. Although this tends to support the argument that the advice provided by bank managers is geared towards the avoidance/reduction of financial risk (Mole, 2002), research nevertheless shows that the support provided by accountants is particularly beneficial (Bennett & Robson, 1999a; Deakins et al., 2001; Greenwood et al., 2002; Gooderham et al., 2004).

3.12. Help for Small Firms Via the Internet

A significant number of public support agencies also provide information and advice via the Internet. For example Business Link and The Small Business Service provides access to a number of web pages that focus on specific topics (e.g. legal issues, training, marketing and finance) (www.sbs.gov.uk, 2007; www.businesslink.gov.uk, 2007).

Business Link also use the Internet to provide information in regards to their local offices thereby enabling site users to gain access to local support. A number of high

street banks also provide information via the Internet. HSBC for example offers advice on managing cash flow, expanding overseas and buying commercial property. Information is also available in regards to starting a business including the preparation of business plans and cashflow forecasts (www.hsbc.co.uk, 2007).

Similarly there are number of private organisations that offer support to small firms via the Internet. For example Smallbusiness.co.uk provides information on a number of key issues including starting a business; financing a business; marketing; human resource management; business technology; legislation; acquiring premises; constructing business plans; obtaining government grants and starting a business abroad (Smallbusiness.co.uk, 2006). This particular organisation also provides an 'ask a question facility,' thereby enabling people to obtain advice on specific issues. For small firms that wish to exploit the potential of the World Wide Web there are several sites that offer advice and support in this area. For example Peter and Pauline Curtis's information service provides advice on a number of issues relating to Internet use, namely website design, networking, Internet security and the registration of domain names (pcurtis.com/enterprise.htm, 2006). This website also provides access to a series of 'How To' articles that can be downloaded by site users.

In addition to the numerous sites that offer general business advice to all small firms there are number of sites that focus specifically on start-ups. For example www.start-ups.co.uk (2007) provides advice and support on '*starting a business on a shoestring*' (p.1), training, running a business from home and gaining access to government grants and initiatives. Emphasising the importance of suitability the site also offers guidance on the type of personality required for small business ownership; the level of commitment needed in order to succeed; personal development and self-motivation. A

similar site has also been created for family owned businesses, which focuses specifically on the problems these firms are likely to face (familybusinessinstitute.com, 2007). The support and advice available via this particular site therefore includes operations planning; conflict resolution; facilitation of family business meetings; workshops and retreats; executive coaching; leadership training; succession planning and workshops that help to develop management and business skills.

3.13. The Effectiveness of Support Provision

Given that the study aims to identify the knowledge and learning sources that are the most beneficial to those who purchase established businesses the effectiveness of support provision is of particular interest, as the perceived efficiency of these facilities is likely to be a key determinant in the level of usage amongst the OMs sampled.

Drawing on past research to determine the restraints that affect the efficiency of small firm support provision, Vickerstaff & Parker (1995) were able to identify a number of key factors (Table 3.3)

The general scepticism of OMs brought about by their reluctance to participate in government initiatives, which has resulted in poor take-up of the facilities on offer

The limited resources of small firms means they are severely restricted

The diverse needs and individual requirements of each small firm make it continually difficult to provide exact requirements

The fact that many small firms are not part of business community networks, the sharing and imparting of knowledge and information is not optimised

The disjointed system of business support activities has meant there is no firm foundation on which to work

Source: Vickerstaff & Parker, 1995

Table 3.3: The key restraints that hinder the efficiency of small firm support provision

However the independent nature of many OMs tends to compound these problems, as support networks are often perceived as a form of state intervention. This is reinforced by the commonplace and unavoidable contact small firm owners have with government bodies, namely the Inland Revenue and VAT inspectorate (McMillan et al., 1990; McHugh & May 1990). In regards to OM training, entrepreneurs have often claimed that this is biased against the small firm sector, as it focuses on formal training methods. Other initiatives such as the Business Growth training Scheme (BGT), received similar criticism as many OMs found their approach too time consuming and *paper intensive ...* (Vickerstaff, 1992: 6; Marlow, 1992). Many OMs also felt they were under-represented on TEC boards where manufacturing was seen as the main priority (Vaughan, 1993; Abbott, 1993). However Curran (1993) argued that it is unreasonable to view the One-Stop-Shop initiative as a panacea for all the difficulties associated with small firm support provision.

Although serious effort has been made to improve the quality of the support offered to small firms, there is evidence, which suggests that public sector support continues to fail small firms (Curran & Blackburn, 2000; Hussey, 2005 Confederation of British Industry, 2005). Moreover despite the proposals that were put forward by the SBS which claimed that the service would make all government departments conscious of the needs and importance of small business; be more responsive to the needs of SMEs and adopt a more business-like approach (DTI, 1999) Curran & Blackburn (2000) were nevertheless able to identify several major weaknesses within the scheme. For example they suggest that the overall concept fails to take into consideration the advice offered by banks and other support agencies, which implies that all new enterprises should establish a market for the services they aim to provide. It is therefore argued that the SBS is merely *'...a revamping of existing provision to an established market...'*

(p.182). Curran & Blackburn also draw attention to the large amount of market information that exists which has been disregarded; a point that is particularly significant, as the information reveals the overwhelmingly low market penetration of small business support services that has persisted since 1980 (MacMillan et al., 1989; Smallbone et al., 1993; Storey, 1994; PA Cambridge Consultants, 1995).

Another significant factor concerning the SBS and other public sector initiatives is the focus on start-ups (Priest, 1997), which is one of the reasons owners of established firms are reluctant to use Government support agencies (Blackburn et al., 1999; Curran & Blackburn, 2000; Hussey, 2005). As very little effort has been made to address this weakness, it is feared that the New Small Business Service has very little chance of outperforming its predecessors (Curran & Blackburn, 2000).

However examinations into the overall effectiveness of small firm support provision, has produced varied opinions, although this could be due to the fact that some firms have been more successful in matching appropriate provision to specific needs (Watkins, 1983). A more precise measure of the success of support schemes was provided by Gray & Stanworth, (1986) who monitored changes in the employment circumstances of participants in the London Enterprise Programme. From those contacted after completing the course, 73% were self-employed full-time. Research conducted by Business in the Community (1987) produced similar results; the failure rate of firms that had been supported by enterprise agencies during the first three years of trading being approximately 16% compared to 33% overall. However, when enterprise agencies withdrew their support after start-up, the failure rate was significantly higher (Smallbone 1989). Smallbone therefore argued that '*... unless small business support agencies provide a structured programme of aftercare for the*

businesses they help to start, they will make little, if any difference to new business survival rates ...' (p.146). However Curran & Stanworth (1989) argue that the variations in success rates of different programmes could be the result of different schemes being directed towards different groups of businesses, some of which are more likely to succeed than others. Robertson et al., (1992) also suggest that success rates amongst small firms are likely to be higher when support is provided in the form of training as opposed to just advice. However many OM's who have identified a specific training need that they are prepared to address, often shy away from government schemes because of the amount of bureaucracy involved (Curran et al., 1995; Kerr & McDougall, 1999). Kerr & McDougall further add that time constraints also make participation difficult although they suggest that the sample used in their study was too small to be considered representative.

Westhead & Storey (1996) draw attention to the way the motivations, constraints and uncertainties affecting SMEs are different from those within larger organisations. For example, when an employee from a small firm attends off-the-job training, a significant loss of output may occur as a result of their absence (Curran et al., 1997). Moreover problems may also arise in regards to the type of programmes available, which often fail to address the key issues that are important to small firm owners. The cost of training programmes, especially where the course has been designed for small numbers, suggests that this particular method of addressing training needs is not only impractical but also inappropriate (Marshall et al., 1995). However the reluctance of SMEs to participate in government schemes also suggests that they are often unaware of the training facilities that are available (Vickerstaff & Parker, 1995). It was therefore concluded that TECs need to offer facilities that were individually structured, a move that was considered vital, as TECs shifted their emphasis from new enterprises towards

SMEs that were growth orientated (Boocock et al., 1998). However it has been argued that the growth potential of most small firms is limited (North & Smallbone, 1995) and that the identification of such firms is often restricted at start-up (Storey, 1994). Some writers also argued that by focusing on growth potential firms start-ups would be neglected (Boocock et al., 1998). However, Atherton et al., (1997) argue that there is no evidence to suggest that it is possible to select winners over the longer term and that determining whether growth firms are in need of support is extremely difficult.

Significantly research conducted by Roper & Hart (2003) to assess the impact of Business Link support on productivity for 1996 failed to produce evidence that BL assistance was in fact being targeted effectively at faster growing firms. The findings also showed that during this period, Business Links had little effect on productivity, growth, turnover and employment. However the research revealed that market conditions, business strategy, the characteristics of OMs and the firm itself are likely to significantly contribute to productivity, turnover and employment growth.

Some writers are nevertheless sceptical about the use of government intervention for a number of reasons. For example Storey (1993), argues that as small firms are not socially or economically more beneficial than their larger counterparts, resources should be directed towards encouraging the growth of those most likely to succeed. Similarly Stanworth & Stanworth (1990) suggest that small firms have little impact on reducing unemployment levels as they only create jobs for their owners. However there is strong evidence to suggest that small firms have a significant influence on job creation. For example research conducted by Birch (1995) in America showed that small firms created the majority of new jobs. He suggests that this is because smaller companies are actively seeking new opportunities, whilst larger firms are looking to redistribute their operations. Similar trends were also observed in the UK, where firms

employing fewer than one hundred people appeared to be increasing their share of employment at the expense of larger firms (Barrow 1995). For example the findings produced by the Quarterly Survey of Small Businesses (NatWest, 1996) revealed that 32% of employees recruited by small firms during that year came from the ranks of the unemployed, a figure that rose to 47% for businesses employing between three and four people. Moreover it has recently been shown that small firms (i.e. firms that employ up to 49 people) accounted for 46.8% of employment (SIC, 2003).

Significantly it is often argued that the majority of support providers are paying lip-service to the needs of small firms '*...without listening to the concerns, worries and aspirations of this vital sector of the UK business community ...*' (Stone, 1996: 35). To underscore this point Stone draws attention to the findings of one of the largest consultative surveys conducted, where representatives from more than seven hundred and fifty firms attended eleven regional conferences and a further thousand responded to individual questionnaires. The results showed that the majority of small firms were dissatisfied with the treatment they received from support providers. However the issues that give most cause for concern were:

Finance: The report revealed that small firms were extremely worried about late payment, but would prefer easier court procedures than a statutory right to interest. Grants were also unpopular as many OMs felt the system was skewed in favour large organisations. Small firm owners would therefore have preferred to receive more capital allowances and tax incentives so that extra funds were available to plough back into the business.

Regulation: The problem was not an overabundance of regulation but a lack of simple, regulations, which are enforced consistently.

Tax and National Insurance: It was often argued that the government uses small firms as unpaid tax collectors; a situation that could be alleviated if PAYE and National Insurance were brought into line. In regards to VAT, small firms tend to prefer incentives for complying, rather than penalties for making mistakes.

Uniform Business Rate: This was a major issue, as it affected small retailers severely. Small firms owners therefore argued that this should be linked to the ability to pay.

Information and Advice: Many small firm owners claimed that they were being deluged with information but not always of the appropriate kind. Instead they would have preferred telephone help-lines and access to information via the Internet rather than large amounts of paperwork from various sources. However Business Links continued to remain a popular source of advice although the quality of service was sometimes questioned.

An examination of the most recent support programmes suggests that these also have little impact on the small firms sector. For example the European Union Objective 4 (O4) programme had very effect on the SME's it hoped to assist (Devins & Johnson, 2003). Implemented in Britain between 1998 and 2000, the main objective of the programme was to '*...help alleviate the threat of social exclusion through long term unemployment by developing the skills of the workforce who were employed but potentially at risk from losing their jobs*' (p.214) However it was postulated that

improved training strategies would also have a positive impact on the competitiveness of SME's.

Having analysed the effects of the programme, Devins & Johnson found that the uptake of training amongst the small business fraternity was extremely low even though a wide range of facilities were available. However, amongst those already engaged in training activities the programme proved useful, as these firms were able to use the resources and support to develop existing strategies. Significantly the firms that benefited the most were those that employed between 25 and 40 people, this group being identified as the most promising candidates for public training initiatives. These findings tend to reflect the results of a study conducted by Mole (2002) who found that Business Link tends to have the greatest impact on small rather than medium or micro-sized firms.

Nonetheless the majority of small firms had little or no involvement with O4, or with the training infrastructure in general (Devins & Johnson, 2003). However Devins & Johnson suggest that the limited (short) time-scale within which the project had to operate may have contributed to the lack of response, even though the programme was widely publicised. It is therefore argued that merely promoting the benefits afforded by training will do little to inspire those who are reluctant to participate in this type of activity (Kitching & Blackburn, 2002). These findings tend to underscore the point made by PIU, (2001) and HM Treasury, (2002) who concluded that there is a need for more innovative, sophisticated methods of intervention that will actively encourage uptake. Doyle & Hughes (2004) further suggest that due to the informality of the training and learning methods employed by the majority of small enterprises, support providers should pay more attention to identifying and supporting effective informal

practices in existing small firms; an approach which would also help to alleviate the problems of resource and time constraints.

However an evaluation of the effectiveness of training programmes for new business creation suggests that this type of activity can help to develop the knowledge and skills relevant to setting up a business (Henry et al., 2004). The findings also show that by interacting with trainers', consultants and established business owners, participants are able to test the feasibility of their ideas and in some cases make significant progress with their development. Moreover it was observed that confidence levels amongst the participants rose significantly, which often increased the propensity to set up a business. However it should be noted that participant satisfaction was not used as a proxy for performance outcomes. The overall results of the study must therefore be treated with caution, particularly as this type of training programme has often been criticised for its inappropriateness and unsuitability (Thomson & Gray, 1999; Huang & Brown, 1999; Curran & Blackburn, 2000; Confederation of British Industry, 2005). Moreover consideration should also be given to whether it is possible to evaluate the effectiveness of a training programme without questioning the participants, who are evidently in the best position to assess its impact.

The amount of criticism directed towards public sector initiatives provides a great deal of scope for improving the overall effectiveness of small firm support provision (Curran & Blackburn, 2000; Henry et al., 2004;), particularly as a significant number of small firm owners are still of the opinion that government support is unable to meet their needs (Confederation of British Industry, 2005; Hussey, 2005).

3.14. The Low Market Penetration of Public Sector Support Provision: An Overview of Contributory Factors

One of the key contributors to the low uptake of support provision is low market penetration, a problem that has prevailed for at least twenty years (MacMillan et al., 1989; Smallbone et al., 1993; Curran & Blackburn, 1994; Storey 1994; Curran et al., 1996b). Looking to determine the precise reasons for this, Curran & Blackburn, (2000) discuss five possibilities that may help to account for the poor uptake of public sector services.

Having examined the various marketing strategies that support providers employ and how effective these are at generating awareness, Curran & Blackburn suggest that it often takes time for small firms to become aware of new initiatives, even though the high levels of publicity support networks receive allows awareness to grow rapidly. For example a tracking study of the small service sector firms in the early 1990s revealed that an awareness of TECs had reached almost 75% of OMs (Curran & Blackburn, 1992). Moreover by 1994 this figure had increased to over 90% (Curran et al., 1994). In 1997 a similar survey found that 77% of those polled were aware of Business Link (Fitchew & Blackburn, 1998), results that were consistent with analyses of Business Link awareness (Bennett & Robson, 1999b). Curran & Blackburn, (2000) therefore concluded that low market penetration is unlikely to be due to insufficient marketing and/or poor marketing techniques.

Examining the costs incurred by those participating in government schemes Curran & Blackburn suggest that financial issues are also unlikely to act as deterrents, as the majority of these services are free of charge. Similarly they believe that poor delivery of services is an unlikely to influence uptake adversely, even though research has

shown that some of the initiatives are '*... slow to access and over-bureaucratically administered ...*' (p.138). However it is significant that some small firm owners have found that the rules often exclude them, a typical example being the Enterprise Allowance Scheme of yesteryear, which was unavailable to OMs of established businesses (Bennett & Robson, 2003). Bennett & Robson (2003) argue that the uptake of public sector support services is also influenced by the way small business owners often distrust the state. Studies conducted previously have produced similar findings, where it was shown that the Government has little credibility with SMEs; their 'commitment' often being perceived as a ploy to win votes (MacMillan et al., 1989; Curran et al., 1992). A significant number of OMs also claim that Government officials have neither the experience nor the expertise to advise on issues relating to small business ownership, a factor that further increases the problem of credibility.

Although there are clearly a number of issues that contribute to the poor take-up of public sector support, some feel that the main reason for under-usage is the inappropriateness of the schemes on offer (Thomson & Gray, 1999; Huang & Brown, 1999; Curran & Blackburn, 2000; Confederation of British Industry, 2005). However Lightfoot (1998) argues that the problem could be twofold as the psychological make-up of small business owners tends to make them poor candidates for support, as they are often determined to remain independent at all costs (Curran & Blackburn, 1994). As a result they may be reluctant to accept help even when the business is in crisis. Nevertheless support providers continually find it difficult to meet the needs of small firms (DTI, 1999a). Aware of the problems these networks face, the DTI argues that it is the diversity and numbers of small firms that make it particularly difficult to '*...develop policies that are responsive to their needs ...*' (p.9).

Curran (2000) suggests that support networks should also consider introducing new concepts, instead of revamping existing schemes. Similarly it has been argued that there are too many overlapping, confusing and inconsistent schemes (McCafferty, (2005). McCafferty therefore concludes that these networks should streamline their services and support schemes, as this would reduce confusion and free-up resources to improve the services that are effective. To ensure that the advice is relevant he suggests that advisers should receive better training, which would enable them to provide better quality assistance, particularly for those who need strategic advice rather than '*...nuts and bolts help...*' (p.1).

3.15. Critique of the Literature

The literature evidently contains a great deal of material relating to OM skills, competences, learning strategies and support provision. However the samples used are rarely disaggregated in a way that makes it possible to identify ownership context. It is therefore extremely difficult to distinguish firms that were purchased as going-concerns from start-ups and/or established enterprises that are owned by the founder member. Clearly there will be instances where it is not necessary to disaggregate the sample in this way, for example where the focus is on start-ups. However if the research intends to examine issues that concern the small business fraternity as a whole (e.g. the effectiveness of support provision), the sample should include subjects from each of these groups.

Similarly studies that focus on established firms may also need to identify ownership context, as the sample is likely to contain two very different sub-groups: businesses that are operated by their founder member(s) and businesses that have undergone a change of ownership through sale and purchase. As many of those who purchase established

enterprises are new to small business ownership (O'Donnell, 1981) it cannot be taken for granted that established firms will be operated by experienced OMs. Skill levels, training needs and the type of support required will therefore differ significantly.

Notably whilst the issues surrounding leadership succession are fairly well documented, the way a firm may be affected by a change of ownership through sale and purchase is not. However given that it has been suggested that changes in ownership can create a number of problems (O'Donnell, 1981) and that it was shown that approximately two out of every five businesses sold came back on the market within five years (Davenport, 1987), this issue is clearly important. It is also significant that whilst a great deal of attention has been paid to failure rates amongst start ups (e.g. Storey, 1993; Cressey & Storey, 1995), there is no data available in regards to failure rates amongst firms that were purchased as profitable going-concerns. This clearly is an important consideration, as a number of issues can arise, that may cause healthy businesses to fail at the hands of new owners (Fuller, 1987). Although there are a number of factors that may contribute to the failure of a small firm, Fuller suggests that failure within this ownership context is usually due to three key factors; people buying the wrong business, incorrect financing and/or or the unsuitability of the business. Accepting that this evidence is largely anecdotal and refers only to the purchase of retail outlets, the underlying implications clearly cannot be ignored. Whilst it has been acknowledged that the figures for small business closures (obtained from the number of businesses that have registered/deregistered for VAT) includes firms other than those which have failed, no effort has been made to disaggregate the various groups even though it has been suggested that some of these firms have simply been taken over (SBS, 2006). As there has also been no attempt to disaggregate ownership context it is

therefore impossible to determine the number of firms that failed after they changed owners.

Gaps in the literature are also evident in regards to support provision, even though the subject is generally well documented. However research in this area tends to focus on start-ups (Birley & Westhead, 1992; Chaston, 1992; Johnson & Ma, 1995; Lebrasseur et al., 2003; Henry et al., 2004; Chrisman & McMullan, 2004) or the effectiveness of support provision generally (Curran, 1993; Vickerstaff & Parker, 1995; Curran & Blackburn, 2000; Hussey, 2005). Although many writers have criticised support providers for their inability to accommodate established firms (Priest, 1997; Curran & Blackburn, 2000; Hussey, 2005) no reference is made to the needs of those businesses that were purchased as going concerns. This suggests that writers often have a one-dimensional view of established firms, which are continually perceived as being owned by experienced OMs. As a significant number of those who purchase established enterprises might have no experience of small firm ownership, this could be a misconception. Researchers therefore need to be more precise when defining ownership context, which being a key variable clearly has the capacity to affect research outcomes.

Having established that ownership context is one of the main characteristics that distinguish one small firm from another, researchers should be aware of this difference when selecting a sample. Where no distinction is made, as was the case in Devins & Johnson's study into the impact of the Objective 4 programme (2003) the research may be adversely affected. Firstly it is impossible to determine whether one particular group is over/under-represented and secondly it cannot be established whether any of the findings are attributable to this particular factor. Consequently the scope of the

research is limited. Given that the above example is just one of many such instances it is therefore postulated that had researchers been more inclined to consider the impact of ownership context and the influence this can have, the uniqueness of firms that were purchased as going concerns would have been recognised earlier.

3.16. The Key Issues that Emerge for the Literature

The literature review clearly highlights a number of key issues that are significant in regards to this study and therefore need to be taken into consideration. For example there is evidence to show that skill prioritisation, support needs, training requirements and learning strategies tend to be significantly influenced by factors such as business type, the firm's growth stage, and the OM's approach to small business ownership. Although there is generally very little distinction between the various ownership contexts, there is nevertheless evidence, which shows that this is also likely to have an impact on the above factors (e.g. family owned firms are very different from non-family owned firms).

The literature also reveals that small firm owners prefer to employ informal training and learning strategies and that formal training is generally unpopular amongst the small business fraternity. However given that the majority of these findings relate to the small business population as whole, it cannot be determined whether they apply equally to all forms of ownership context (e.g. start-ups, established firms). There is therefore a need to determine how these issues impact/effect those who purchase established enterprises.

3.17. Research Aim and Propositions

Having established that there is a lack of research into small businesses that are purchased as going-concerns, the study therefore aims to provide insight into these firms by determining (1) which skills and competences are perceived as being the most important to the success of these establishments; (2) which learning and knowledge sources are used by OMs to develop skills and competences and moreover which of these is the most beneficial; (3) whether purchasers of established enterprises have particular support needs and if such a need exists how these needs might best be addressed and (4) how those who purchase established enterprises may formulate strategies for skill development and ongoing learning; this being presented in the form of a framework that can be used to create learning plans.

Following on from the research aims and objectives, it is now appropriate to consider this study and offer a number of propositions

Proposition 1: Particular support is required for those who take over/purchase

Established enterprises

Proposition 2: The skill priorities of those who purchase established enterprises are

influenced by business type.

Proposition 3: The skill priorities of those who purchase small going-concerns are

significantly influenced by the fact that the business was purchased as
an established enterprise

Proposition 4: The Skill Priorities of experienced OMs will differ from those who are

relatively new to small firm ownership (experienced being defined as having owned a business before and/or where the OM concerned has been operating their current business for more than two years)

Proposition 5: Preferred methods of training are influenced by the fact the business was purchased as an established enterprise

Having defined the research objectives and propositions, the following chapter describes the research design. An examination is therefore made of the methodologies commonly associated with small business research, the research philosophies adopted by this study and the methods of data collection employed. The chapter also explains why, given the purpose of the research, this particular design was considered to be the most appropriate.

CHAPTER 4

Research Design and Methods of Data Collection

4.1. Introduction

Researchers are presented with a choice of philosophies, each of which can significantly bias the outcome of the study. In regards to small business research it has been found that the two most frequently used methodologies are positivism and phenomenology (White, 1999). The first section of this chapter therefore documents the underlying principles of these two philosophies and the advantages/disadvantages that may be afforded by each. Also included is a brief examination of the issues surrounding epistemology and its arguable link to research methodologies. This is followed by a discussion concerning the research philosophies embraced by this study, where justification is provided as to why this particular approach was considered the most appropriate. An overview of the relationship between research and theory and the roles played by induction and deduction are also included in this section. Although the discussions are lengthy, no apologies are made for this, as it is the principles that lie embedded within a research design that determines its overall outcome (Douglas, 1976; Sarantakos, 1998; Fletcher, 1998). Moreover the reliability and validity of the research may be brought into question if the methodology employed is inappropriate (Sarantakos, 1998).

4.2. Positivism

Providing a clear definition of the Positivist paradigm and the philosophy it represents is a complicated process. For example Halfpenny (1982) suggests that:

'... there are so many different understandings of how the term should and can be used ...' [that anti-positivists] '... use the term loosely to describe all sorts of disfavoured forms of enquiry' (p.11).

However Lincoln & Cuba (1985) argue that definitions often depend on the counterpoints the researcher is trying to make. From a more objective point of view, Van Maanen (1979) believes that positivism and anti-positivism cannot be regarded as mutually exclusive as the differences between the two are located in the overall form, focus and emphasis of the study. Given that positivism is often condemned or misrepresented, it is therefore necessary to provide a precise definition of the paradigm in order to avoid any misunderstandings.

To gain insight into positivism and the principles it embraces it is first necessary to examine the work of Comte (1830-1842) whose concept of positivism consists of two dimensions:

- i) Methodological – that which asserts that the only true knowledge is scientific knowledge, and
- ii) Social and political – this referring to the way in which proponents expected positive knowledge of social phenomena to permit a new scientifically grounded intervention in politics and social affairs which would transform social life

In selecting the term Positivism, Comte conveyed his intention to renounce all reliance on earlier religious or speculative metaphysical bases of knowledge. Scientific knowledge was therefore regarded as 'relative knowledge', not absolute: the latter

being a form of knowledge that is always unavailable. Comte's social and political programme envisaged a new consensus on social issues and a reorganisation of society on lines suggested by the new science of sociology. A role would therefore exist for sociologists in government and education and in establishing a new '*Religion of Humanity*' (Jary & Jary, 1999: 507). However this particular concept shifted slightly in the 1920's and 1930's where a group of Philosophers, known collectively as the Vienna Circle, gave Comte's positivism a more secure logical basis; the main principle being the Verification Principle, which states that the only valid knowledge is knowledge which is verified by sensory experience. It was therefore predicted that scientific knowledge would '*...ultimately find formulation in logically interrelated general propositions, grounded in statements about basic facts stated in a strictly formulated 'sense datum' language...*' (Jary & Jary: 508). However there are several factors that question the credibility of this particular concept, the majority of which stem from the fact that universal propositions (e.g. all swans are white) can never be established with certainty, as it is impossible to predict what may occur in the future. As a result many theorists including Popper (1959,) suggest that this particular principle must be replaced, as the criterion of scientific statements by the conception of 'falsifiability', (e.g. the singular occurrence of a black swan) will falsify a universal proposition of this kind. Because the verification principle is also proposed by Logical Positivists as a criterion for 'meaningfulness', a further criticism of this concept is that it is impossible to determine the status of the principle, which itself is unverifiable, hence the so-called 'paradox' of positivism.

More recently however, positivism tends to incorporate disciplines that focus more on the teachings of idealism (e.g. Berkley, 1988) and scepticism (e.g. Miller, 1981). As positivism has expanded into a number of different directions since the initial concept

put forward by Comte (1830-1842), it is impossible to provide a single classification of this particular philosophy. It is therefore necessary to outline the various definitions put forward by other researchers.

For example Sarantakos (1998)) suggests that:

'For positivists, human beings are rational individuals who are governed by social laws: their behaviour is learned through observation and governed by external causes that produce the same results ... There is no free will. The world however is not deterministic: causes produce effects under certain conditions, and predictions can be limited by the occurrence of such conditions (p.37)

This particular standpoint tends to underscore the similarities between positivism and naturalism, both of which conceptualise that the world in which we live can be explicated. For instance Honderich (1995) believes that everything is essentially natural (i.e. that it belongs to nature) and can therefore:

'... Be studied by the methods appropriate for studying that world, and the apparent expectation can somehow be explained away'. (p.604).

However, there are researchers who disagree with this particular viewpoint, the argument being that what may be appropriate for the natural sciences may not be appropriate when applied to social science, as the latter has more factors that need to be considered. Many more outcomes are therefore possible for any given event. Hughes (1990) however, argues that a paradigm should not be rejected because it is continually challenging, even though the complexities of social science can make its application more difficult. From a slightly different perspective McNeill (1990)

suggests that the use of positivist methods within the realms of social scientific research often defeats the whole object, as it is extremely difficult to explain an event in the social world if that explanation fails to take into consideration '*...what the people involved feel and think about it...*' (p.19).

Positivism has also been criticised for its use and acceptance of induction, (i.e. '*the derivations of a general principle ... which is inferred from specific observations*' [Williams & May, 1996:22]). Condemned also for its absence of certitude Williams & May nevertheless argue that a theory should not be invalidated simply because it cannot be proved unconditionally. White (1999) therefore claims

'... That unless such theories are extended, there are no foils against which others can compare their own work and without them 'knowledge' will stagnate' (p121/122).

However perhaps the most relevant argument against the use of positivist methods lies within the fact that this approach is often considered unrealistic: the control and manipulation exerted upon the variables tested implying that the results produced cannot really be perceived as being truly representative of the real world (Behling, 1991). Attempting to close the apparent gap between social and physical science within this context, Philips (1987) suggests that the only real difference lies in the types of factors that interact with each other. This view is supported by Williams & May (1996) who argue that physical and social science are fundamentally the same, although each needs to '*... elaborate its explanations in a way that is appropriate to its subject matter...*' (p.82).

Conceptualising positivism in its simplest form, Hunt (1990) suggests that it is a doctrine which views an individual's perceptions of an event (or object) as shared and unvarying whereas the relativist/constructivist stance believes that an individual's perception is inimitable; this being the result of 'multiple realities' that are all equally valid. However from this perspective, research may be considered as all-but worthless as it has neither the scope nor the vision to expand beyond this point. Although perceptions may vary from person to person, it is nevertheless possible to identify a common ground that embodies a specific concept (e.g. evil). It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that the ideal philosophy is that which looks to find a middle ground between the two extremes (White, 1999).

In regards to the way research philosophy influences design and approach, Campbell (1978) maintains that this comprises two very specific and separate concepts:

- i) Quantitative - which is essentially scientific
- ii) Qualitative - which refers to the collection of data via case studies, fieldwork, participant observation, process evaluation etc.

Philips (1987) however, maintains that positivists are unlikely to commit themselves to any particular research design as there is: '*... Nothing in the doctrines of positivism that necessitates the love of statistics or distaste for case studies*' (p.96)

4.3. Phenomenology

Although the concept of positivism may be much broader within the realms of modern research, phenomenology by contrast argues that all knowledge is socially constructed and orientated towards specific practical problems. As a result 'facts' can never be

neutral, but are reflective of why they are required (Berger & Luckman, 1967). Phenomenology may therefore be described as: *'...An epistemology that emphasises the importance of understanding the process through which human beings concretise their relationship with the world'* (Morgan & Smircich, 1980: 493).

Although this approach is widely used by the social sciences, many business researchers remain reluctant to adopt this stance. Drawing attention to the disadvantages of 'holding on' to the more traditional, positivist methods, Mintzberg (1979: 584) argues:

'... the more deeply we probe into this field of organisation, the more complex we find it to be and the more we need to fall back on so called exploratory as opposed to 'rigorous' research methodologies.'

Despite the benefits that may be afforded by this approach, positivist methods still tend to prevail within the realms of business research. However for those involved in doctoral research this is perhaps not surprising. Smith (1991) for example draws attention to the inappropriateness of the phenomenological approach when applied to this type of investigation that it is unacceptable to depend upon what amounts to little more than *'serendipity'* (p.222). Smith goes on to suggest that there may be very little to discuss if the research fails to substantiate the hypothesis under test. As this is unlikely to occur when *'...one is still waiting for a theory to emerge from the data'* (p.222), those undertaking doctoral research clearly need to exercise extreme caution, particularly as researchers (when selecting a research philosophy) may be trading reliability for validity, or vice versa (Bonoma, 1985). However if it is generally accepted that all research strategies contain a significant number of disadvantages, it

therefore becomes almost impossible to undertake research that is wholly methodologically sound (Denzin, 1970; McGrath, 1982; Bonoma, 1985).

One of the main advantages of phenomenological-based research is the richness of the data it has the capacity to generate, which often results in: '*...serendipitous findings and the adumbration of unforeseen theoretical leaps*' (Miles, 1979: 500).

This particular approach also allows researchers to consider (and include) the context in which the individuals being studied are to be found, which often adds weight to the interpretations and meanings of the subsequent results (Chadwick et al., 1984). Chadwick et al also argue that by increasing the role of participants, the research becomes more humanised. Researchers are therefore able to gain a much deeper understanding of those being studied (Bryman, 1988).

However qualitative methods often have the disadvantage of being complex and involved, which is another reason why researchers may prefer to adopt a positivist stance (Sarantakos, 1998). For example conducting interviews can be difficult, as interviewers need to develop high degrees of friendship and integrity (Pannas, 1996). Pannas also claims that encouraging respondents to discuss their personal views and opinions can be particularly arduous as this often necessitates spending large amounts of time with the interviewees. Researchers who adopt this approach therefore need to be aware of these problems and ensure they have adequate time in which to complete their investigations, particularly in regards to participant observation where '*... there is always one more person to interview, one more loose end to tie up or one more area to pursue..*' (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984: 67).

Looking at the various attempts that have been made to explain and define positivism and phenomenology, it is clear that many of these conceptualisations are derived from the identification of factors that ostensibly discredit and/or negate a particular stance. Given that this often results in a positivism versus phenomenology conundrum, it is therefore necessary to examine the benefits that may be afforded by combining both philosophies and how this particular approach often allows the researcher to gain the maximum benefits from each (Bryman, 1988).

4.4. Epistemological Considerations

Although the principles surrounding positivist and phenomenological research perspectives are discernible it is often difficult to establish a clear symmetry between epistemological positions and associated techniques of social research (surveys, interviews etc.) Bryman (1988) suggests that problems are most likely to occur when philosophical issues and technical issues are treated simultaneously. He then goes on to suggest that although philosophical issues relate to questions of epistemology (i.e. the appropriate foundation for the study of society), technical issues are more concerned with the appropriateness of research methods in relation to one another. He also claims that the more recent methodological literature views the latter as deriving from the former. However Snizek, (1976) argues that a clear-cut relationship between methodology and technique are not always necessary. Having examined a number of journal articles, Snizek discovered that research techniques cannot be '*...directly extrapolated from a knowledge of a researchers epistemological assumptions...*' (p.89). Similarly Marsh (1982) questions whether the survey technique is inherently positivistic and consequently whether participant observation is inherently phenomenological. With recourse to the findings of White & Gans (1966), Bryman (1988), suggests that the majority of researchers are mainly concerned with

'...achieving a piece of research in a manner that was most appropriate to the topic in hand...' (p.89). He also found that some writers place participant observation in the same epistemological space as the social survey. Having discovered that the choice of research method is closely linked to personal preference, Bryan therefore argues that although this may not be the ideal basis for selecting a particular research design, it does nevertheless suggest that *'...attempting to relate questions of method to philosophical debates...fails to supply an efficiently accurate account of social research...' (p.89).*

Although the epistemological-technical argument is clearly open to interpretation, data collection methods continue to remain a question of appropriateness (Sarantakos, 1998).

4.5. Methodological Pluralism

One way of overcoming the problems that may be incurred if one particular method is used in isolation, is the employment of a plurality of methods. Although it has been argued that the differences between quantitative and qualitative research is often exaggerated (Bryman, 1988; Pawson, 1989). Evered & Reiss Louis (1991) nevertheless draw attention to the way organisational research tends to fall into two specific categories (1) The methodologically precise - but often irrelevant - positivist approach and (2) The crucially relevant - but often indistinguishable and incredulous - phenomenological approach. They therefore conclude that researchers should look to combine both of these methods, in order to secure the strengths of each whilst avoiding their respective inadequacies. Similarly Marsden & Littler (1996) suggest that researchers *'...Should try and derive insights and knowledge from different perspectives and methodological approaches.'* (p. 654)

However Bryman (1988) claims there are a number of benefits that can be afforded by the multi-method approach, namely (1) qualitative and quantitative data can be used to check the accuracy of the conclusions reached on the basis of each; (2) qualitative research can be used to produce hypotheses which can subsequently be checked using quantitative methods, (3) quantitative and qualitative approaches can be used together to produce a more complete picture of the social group being studied and (4) qualitative research may be used to help explain why certain variables are statistically correlated.

A combination of methodologies may therefore help to create balance and perspective as well as increasing the overall scope of the research (Easterby-Smith et al., 1991). Moreover it will also allow researchers to exploit the advantages and '*... neutralize, rather than compound the liabilities.*' (Jick, 1979:604).

However, in some instances employing a plurality of methods may not be feasible due to the costs involved and/or other resource limitations (Martin, 1982; Bonoma, 1985). On these occasions the researcher may therefore rely on '*... "interproject" triangulation, to help accrue a body of knowledge satisfying the two desiderata of integrity and currency*' (Martin, 1982: 32).

4.6. Criticisms of Small Business Research

Although a significant amount of research has been conducted into small firms, the methodology employed frequently evokes criticism, as it argued that the research methods often limit the scope of the study. For example since the findings of the Bolton Committee (1971), research into the performance of small firms suggests that the majority of problems can be attributed to the shortage of OM skills, in particular

financial and business management (Storey, 1983; Hall & Young, 1991; Nyak & Greenfield, 1991; Keasey & Watson, 1993; Thomson & Gray, 1999; Huang & Brown, 1999). However such findings are often arguable, as researchers tend to parallel the performance of small firms against an idealistic view of management/accounting procedures (Jarvis et al., 1996). Jarvis et al also claim that little or no attention is paid to the differences between large and small organisations and that this type of research often fails to consider what exactly constitutes effective management practice. There is therefore a need for alternative ways of measuring the success of small firms, which are less likely to emphasise the firm's financial performance (Hopwood & Miller, 1994; Ryan, 1995; Walker and Brown, 2004).

Although the performance level of small firms is usually measured against profit maximisation (e.g. profit margins and/or return on investments) (Ezzamel, 1992), there is evidence which suggests that OM's often look beyond these factors and have instead a wide range of goals and aspirations that are totally unrelated to financial performance and profitability (Brush, 1992; Loscocco, 1997; Still & Timms, 1998; Walker & Brown, 2004), namely survival, stability, pride and the determination to succeed (Chell, 1991; Curran et al., 1997; Walker & Brown, 2004). To obtain a more realistic view of small business performance it is therefore argued that more attention should be paid to these factors (Dent, 1996; Atkinson et al., 1997; Walker & Brown, 2004): rather those that may lead to the assumption that the majority of OM's are poorly skilled in financial and business management.

One of the main reasons that conclusions are often drawn in accordance with the textbook management practices employed within larger firms is the ease at which access can be gained for research purposes (Dewhurst & Burns, 1996). Dewhurst and

Burns further argue that skills are also likely to be assessed in an idealised context, which tends to assume that the majority of small firms are growth orientated. However evidence shows that a significant number of small firms have no desire to grow (Watson, 1995). For example a recent study into the health, wealth and happiness of those operating micro businesses (More Than Business, 2005) revealed that just 3% of those surveyed had a desire to grow. Research that focuses on OM skills and/or the key areas for skills development may therefore need to consider factors other than those, which facilitate growth. White (1999) also draws attention to the way this type of data is often obtained through surveys, which he argues can place further restrictions on the research. Moreover it is this particular approach that often leads researchers to conclude that skill deficiency is the major cause of high failure rates amongst small firms (Cressey & Storey, 1995; NatWest, 1997). Ascribing small business failure to poor performance is nevertheless a narrow concept, as failure may occur for a number of reasons, including external influences that are beyond the control of the firm (Birley & Niktari, 1995; Thompson & Gray, 1999).

Although the research conducted here is not directly concerned with the failure of small firms that were purchased as established enterprises, it does nevertheless examine the way skills are prioritised for successful business ownership within this context. Given that success and/or performance is measured against a wide range of factors (Brush, 1992; Loscocco, 1997; Still & Timms, 1998; Walker & Brown, 2004) the research methods employed therefore need to take this into consideration and allow the researcher to retain an 'open mind' (Jarvis et al., 1995, 1996; Curran et al., 1997).

4.7. The Research Philosophies Embraced By This Study

The research conducted here therefore embraces the principles of phenomenology and positivism. The decision to adopt a multi-method approach is influenced mainly by the nature of the research objectives and propositions. However the researcher is of the opinion that to adopt just one particular stance would (1) leave a significant number of questions unanswered and (2) severely limit the scope of the research. Although a significant amount of data will be collated through the use of questionnaires (Phase 1), the study nevertheless has a strong qualitative element; Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the research being conducted via face-to face interviews. In addition to being able to compare the findings generated by these two phases, the qualitative aspect of the research will also help to explain the results generated by Phase 1 of the research (the survey) namely (1) why certain variables are influenced by/related to others and (2) the reasons why the respondents answered questions in particular way. Qualitative research is also required to examine issues that are too broad in scope to include on a postal survey, namely planning/budgeting, informal training and the way success is perceived/measured.

Although the choice of methods and methodologies are governed primarily by the need to fulfil specific research objectives, the design of the study also reflects the researchers general approach to social scientific research, namely that it is very difficult to obtain a true picture of the social group being studied if only one methodology is used. The researcher therefore adopts a pragmatic stance based on the argument that by adopting one particular approach, the research is likely to pose more questions than it answers. Although this can be viewed positively in certain research contexts (for example where the aim is to identify issues/areas that need to be examined in more detail/from a different perspective), leaving a number of questions unanswered and/or posing

additional questions that cannot be answered is likely to (1) severely limit the scope of the research and/or (2) create significant gaps which result in the research being incomplete.

Despite the views held by the researcher with regards to the approach to social scientific research, great care will be taken to avoid introducing bias into the research. Although the postal survey is unlikely to cause such problems (this particular method is particularly effective at reducing the risk of bias [May, 1993]), the accountants and OM interviews clearly carry a much greater risk as the manner and approach of the interviewer can have a significant effect on the respondents (Bell, 1993) particularly where, as in this case, the interviews are carried out by just one person (Gavron, 1966). However given that bias is most likely to result from the strong views held by the researcher on the topic and/or aspects of the topic that is being studied (Bell, 1993), this form of bias is likely to remain minimal as the researcher does not hold strong views about this particular subject (i.e. small firm ownership). The way that questions are put and the tendency to 'lead' respondents is therefore unlikely to apply here.

4.8. The Prevalence of Survey-Based Research

As questionnaires are capable of generating large amounts of data that may be difficult to collate using other methods, this approach is frequently used in small business research. However, the limitations of this particular method need to be taken into consideration, as the information generated by questionnaires often provides little insight into the reasons for respondents' answers (Robson, 1993).

Looking at the advantages and disadvantages afforded by survey-based research Sarantakos (1998) presents a basic summary of the literature relating to this method.

Examining the advantages that are afforded by questionnaires Sarantakos suggests that this approach is often an inexpensive and relatively simple way of gathering information. As it is easier to protect the anonymity of respondents, it is therefore likely that the results will be more reliable than those obtained from many of the alternative methods, which tend to be more direct (e.g. face-to-face interviews). Sarantakos also draws attention to the consistency and convenience of the method, namely that all respondents have been asked exactly the same questions and that the questionnaire can be completed at a time that best suits the respondents. However, he suggests that the main advantage of surveys is that it is possible to cover a wide range of geographical locations, which often enhances the generalizability of the results.

With regards to the limitations and restrictions of survey-based research, Sarantakos argues that this particular method does not allow researchers to determine why respondents answered a question in a particular way and/or what was meant by the answer. He also suggests that problems may arise if respondents have missed out questions and/or selected only the questions they wish to answer. If this is a common trend amongst the sample, it may be virtually impossible to gather the information required. However if the questionnaire is extensively piloted before being distributed amongst the main sample, these problems can be identified and addressed (Czaja & Blair, 1996).

Despite the numerous disadvantages of using surveys, the employment of this method continues to predominate; mail surveys in particular being '*... a staple in quantitative research on small business and entrepreneurship...*' (Dennis, 2003: 278). Even though research techniques have progressed significantly over the years, surveys are still the most widely used source of data collection within the area of small business research

(Wortman, 1986; Churchill and Lewis, 1986; Aldrich, 1992; Aldrich & Baker, 1997). For example Dennis (2003) draws attention to fact that one third of all referred articles contained within five small business journals (calendar years, 1998 and 1999) relied on mail surveys as their primary data source¹.

Given that mail surveys are likely to remain an important research tool within this field, methodological issues relating to this approach are of considerable interest, particularly with regards to the ongoing problem of low response rates. As it is not uncommon for researchers to receive a return of 30% or less (Paxon et al., 1995; Aldrich & Baker, 1997) strategies for increasing response rates are constantly being sought. However the literature on treatments for raising response rates in business surveys is confusing and often contradictory (Dennis, 2003). For example Dennis argues that formal literature reviews and meta-analyses identify only four treatments that consistently raise response rates: (1) repeat contacts; (2) financial incentives; (3) university sponsorship and (4) stamped returned envelopes (Table 4.1). However he argues that very few of the steps commonly employed to increase response in business surveys '*...are sanctioned by empirical evidence*' (p.281)

Although Dennis was able to ascertain that small business populations tend to react favourably to an additional questionnaire wave (p292) he nevertheless concludes that the most important element is '*... the professionalism of the overall look, including its ease of completion rather than the precise design*' (p.292).

¹The journals were: *Journal of Small Business Management*, *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *Journal of Business Venturing*, *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, and the *International Small Business Journal*.

1. Follow-Ups/Reminders/Contacts: Jobber, 1986; Yammarino et al., 1991; Jobber & Saunders, 1993; Roth & BeVier, 1998; Green et al., 1998; Jobber & O'Reilly, 1998; Greer et al., 2000; Dillman, 2000.
2. Financial Incentives: Jobber 1986; Jobber & Saunders, 1993; Dillman, 2000.
3. University Sponsor: Jobber & O'Reilly, 1998; Green et al., 1998; Greer et al., 2000.
4. Stamped Return Envelopes: Jobber, 1986; Yammarino et al., 1991; Jobber & O'Reilly, 1998; Dillman, 2000.

May or May Not Increase Response

1. Shorter Questionnaires (length)
Increases: Yammarino et al., 1991; Jobber & Saunders, 1993.
Does Not Increase: Roth & BeVier, 1998; Green et al., 1998.
2. Prenotification:
Increases: Roth & BeVier, 1998.
Does Not Increase: Jobber, 1986; Green et al., 1998; Greer et al., 2000.
3. Nonmonetary Incentives
Increases: Jobber, 1986; Jobber & O'Reilly, 1998.
Does Not Increase: Yammarino et al., 1991; Roth & BeVier, 1998.
4. Promised Anonymity
Increases: Jobber & Saunders, 1993.
Does Not Increase: Roth & BeVier, 1998; Green et al., 1998.
5. Personalisation
Increases: Dillman, 2000.
Does Not Increase: Jobber, 1986; Yammarino et al., 1991; Green et al., 1998.

Lesser Evidence

1. Topic Salience
Increases: Roth & BeVier, 1998; Greer et al., 2000.
2. Visible ID Number
Increases: Roth & BeVier, 1998.

Source: Dennis Jnr. 2003

Table 4.1. Treatments Increasing and Not Increasing Response rates in Mail Surveys of Business Populations Based on Literature Reviews and Meta-Analyses

Although the problem of poor response can be resolved by administering a greater number of questionnaires, the possibility of bias still exists. Oppenheim (1992) suggests that this is mainly due to the fact that returns are not representative of the original sample drawn because ‘...non-response is not a random process; it has its own determinants, which vary from survey to survey ...’ (Oppenheim, 1992: 34). The

key determinant is therefore the appropriateness of the research design and the development of effective researcher-respondent relationships (Dennis, 2003). As pre-survey contact either by telephone or face-to face facilitates this, response rates are likely to be significantly higher than a covering letter alone.

However a point which Dennis (2003) fails to acknowledge, are the advantages that may be afforded if the researcher is an experienced interviewer and/or has worked in a similar environment. For example if pre-survey contact is initiated by an individual who has worked as a market researcher, he/she is likely to be more successful than somebody who is unfamiliar with this type of 'cold calling'. Whilst attention is often drawn to the need for effective interview techniques (Seidman, 1991; Witzel, 2000), relatively little has been documented in regards to the benefits that may be afforded by experience.

Given that low response rates often create problems, it could be argued that researchers should consider adopting an alternative approach. However if this particular stance is rejected in favour of a phenomenological approach, this may also prove inadequate if used in isolation. Although there may be several reasons for this one of the most significant is that put forward by Smith (1986) who argues that '*Observation and deduction alone are not enough, but must be supported by a wide range of exact knowledge*' (p.34)

The fact that Smith is referring to issues relating to physical science tends to underscore the disadvantage of over-reliance on one particular methodology.

4.9. Selecting the Appropriate Research Methods

Given that the research looked to determine (1) which skills and competences are perceived as being the most important to the success of small firms that were purchased as established enterprises; (2) the knowledge and learning sources that purchasers of established businesses use to develop skills and competences and which of these sources are the most beneficial; (3) whether purchasers of established enterprises have particular support needs and, if such a need exists, how these needs might best be supported and (4) how OMs taking over established enterprises may formulate strategies that for skill development and ongoing learning, data needed to be collected from a significant number of OMs who had purchased going-concerns. Moreover the data also needed to be in quantitative form as this would allow the researcher to perform various statistical procedures in order to determine whether certain key variables were influenced by/related to other variables.

However there are various methods of collecting quantitative of data, some of which are more effective when addressing specific kinds of questions or topics (Neuman, 1994). Firstly there is experimental research, which involves dividing a relatively small number of people into two or more groups and subjecting just one of the groups to a specific 'treatment'. The reactions of both groups are then measured precisely and conclusions drawn in accordance with differences in the reactions of the groups that are due to the treatment alone (Neuman, 1994). Although this technique has been found to be effective for exploratory research, it was nevertheless considered inappropriate here. Content analysis would also have been ineffective as this particular technique is used to examine information/content in written or symbolic material (e.g. pictures, movies.). Although some studies are able to utilise a source of previously collected information (existing statistics research), this method could not be considered in this instance as

there was no data available that help would provide answers to the research questions (i.e. the research objectives). It was therefore also impossible to conduct 'secondary analysis research', although this particular technique tends to be used primarily for descriptive research (Neuman, 1994). Unlike the methods described above a postal survey will enable the researcher to determine whether skill prioritisation is influenced by factors such business type, the length of time the business has been owned and previous ownership of a small business. This method of data collection will also provide information regarding the most frequently used sources of advice, the uptake of formal training, whether the training that has been taken is more likely to be managerial or technical and whether there is a need for training that will assist those who purchase established businesses. Given also that the questionnaire will ask respondents to provide an indication of their current skill levels in specific areas, it will also be possible to gain insight into the key areas for skill development. Moreover by examining the reasons for training abstention the researcher will be provided with an indication of the constraints that need to be taken into consideration when devising strategies for skill development an ongoing learning.

In addition to identifying areas that require further investigation, the information generated by the questionnaire will also be used to test the research propositions documented in section 3.9. To obtain a professional viewpoint interviews will be conducted with a number of accountants who are experienced in working with small business owners. However if additional data is required interviews will also be held with a cross-section of the OMs who participated in the survey.

Although focus groups could also provide the information required, this method was nevertheless considered impractical due to the unlikelihood of being able to form such groups and the limited amount of time and financial resources available.

By adopting a multi-method approach the scope of the study is clearly broadened in several ways. Firstly the research will provide insight and knowledge from two very different standpoints. Secondly as relatively little insight can be gathered from measurement alone (Kaplan, 1964), collecting additional qualitative data will help to answer the key questions generated by the results of the quantitative research (i.e. the survey). The researcher will therefore be able to determine why specific skills are more highly prioritised than others; why some sources of advice are more popular than others; what factors influence training uptake; why certain forms of training are more popular than others and how the support/learning needs of those taking over existing establishments might best be addressed. By comparing the results of the accountants' interviews with the findings generated by the OM questionnaire the researcher can also establish to what degree the opinions of the accountants are reflected in the answers provided by the OMs.

The two phases of the research are therefore as follows:

Phase 1: The gathering of quantitative data via postal questionnaires administered to a random sample of small firm owners who purchased established businesses. This phase of the research is mainly concerned with determining to what degree the propositions are supported. However the questionnaire will also be used identify areas that need to be examined in more detail

Phase 2: The collection of qualitative data using face-to-face interviews. In this instance a number of professionals (accountants) will be interviewed who are actively involved with small firms and can therefore provide information from a different perspective. This phase of the research will be used to triangulate the findings of Phase 1 of the study.

4.10. Induction and Deduction

As induction and deduction concerns the relationship between theory and research it is therefore an important consideration particularly as the empirical work that forms the basis of the research process involves collecting data that initiates, refutes or organises specific theories (Bulmer, 1986). There are however two ways of achieving this. The first, deduction, involves the selection of a particular area of study or specific social group on which to test the strength of specific theories and/or hypotheses. By contrast, induction uses the research to generate theories, which are derived from the resultant data (May, 1993).

The research conducted here includes induction and deduction. Although this could initially be perceived as a contradiction in terms, this can be justified by the nature of the study and the area researched. Although small firms that were purchased as established enterprises is a relatively new area of small business research, it is nevertheless likely that many of the previous studies conducted into small firms used samples that contained a number of businesses that were purchased as going-concerns. The findings generated by this research therefore apply also to this particular sub-sector, as the input from the OMs of these firms influenced the overall outcome. It is therefore possible to generate from the existing literature specific propositions that can

be tested using a questionnaire administered to a random sample of individuals who have purchased established businesses (deduction).

However given that there is very little documentation concerning small firms that are purchased as established enterprises, very little known about the skills and competences that are important to the success of these enterprises; the learning/knowledge sources the OMs are most likely to exploit; the support and training needs of the OMs who operate these businesses and how these firms might best be supported. Given that the qualitative phase of study examines these particular issues in depth, the results could form the basis for new theories (induction).

4.11. Selecting a Sample for The Survey (Phase 1 of the Research)

4.11.i. The Sampling Procedure

There are clearly a number of advantages that can be gained by sampling. For example compared to a complete enumeration of the population, data can be collected relatively cheaply (May, 1993). Moreover sampling also requires fewer people to collate the data and can be processed and analysed relatively quickly (compared to the time it takes to process and analyse data from the whole population) (Moser & Kalton, 1983; Statistics Canada, 2006). However one of the main advantages of sampling is that it permits a higher degree of accuracy as the size of the sample allows researchers to monitor the process throughout (Bryman & Cramer, 1990).

Clearly there are many ways in which a sample can be obtained for small business research, although not all will permit generalisation of the findings. For example, using volunteers may produce the required aggregate but as it is a self-selecting sample the

subsequent results cannot be considered representative of the whole population (Coolican, 1990). Using a sample that has been drawn from one specific source (e.g. the telephone directory) may also cause problems, as this gives a random sample only of the telephone directory as a population (Bryman & Cramer, 1990). However Muhamad & Idris (2005) employed random sampling using a national frame from the Malaysian Statistics department. Having randomly selected four states, a random selection of districts was made from each state, 750 respondents being sampled from each. This was followed by the selection of a stratified sample (randomly selected) that took into consideration the country's social economic profile (e.g. gender, age, ethnicity). Given the aim of the research was to examine workplace learning throughout the whole of Malaysia this particular approach therefore ensured that the respondents were representative of the population.

For generalisability a sample therefore needs to be randomly selected otherwise the findings cannot be applied to the population as a whole, 'population' within this context referring to all the cases (Robson, 1993). In this study the population comprises all those who purchased established enterprises within the geographical areas specified (i.e. Torbay and South Hams/Totnes). However random sampling requires careful planning (May, 1993), as problems can occur if the original sampling frame omits specific groups and/or is ordered in a particular way.

The sample used in this study was therefore drawn from several sources, namely estate agents and accountants, which made it possible to administer questionnaires to a wide range of individuals who have purchased small businesses. Although this avoids many of the difficulties associated with orders, the geographical locations from which the

samples were drawn are strongly geared towards tourism. It is therefore likely that this particular industry will be over-represented.

4.11.ii. Selecting a Sample for This Study

Deciding on the size of a sample is clearly dependent on a number of factors. However Neuman (1994) suggests that the determinants are (1) the type of data analysis the researcher plans; (2) how accurate the sample needs to be for the researchers purposes and (3) population characteristics. Drawing attention to the way that large samples that have been selected from poor sampling frames can be less representative than smaller samples that have been selected from good sampling frames, Neuman claims that the best results are often obtained '*by using a rule of thumb...*' (p.124), which is based on past experience with samples that have met the requirements of the statistical methods.

The main principle of sample sizes is therefore the smaller the population, the larger the sampling frame (i.e. one with a high probability of generating the same results as the entire population). Neuman therefore suggests that where the population totals less than 1000, the sample size needs to be around 30%. However if the population is large (over 150,000) a sampling ratio of 1% will suffice. This particular method was therefore employed to obtain a random sample of estate agents/accountants (all of who had access to individuals that had purchased established enterprises) from which a random sample of small business purchasers could be drawn ($35 \times 30\% = 10$). However it was difficult to determine the size of the population in regards to businesses that had been purchased as established enterprises, as there is no data/literature available which shows the proportion of small firms that have been taken over as going-concerns in the two sample areas (i.e. Totnes and Torbay). The sample size is therefore based on the figures provided by the accountants/estate agent's business records, which when added together suggest that the number of businesses that were purchased as going-concerns

in the previous year (2001) was 1165. Given that this provided a population size of round 1000, the sampling ratio used was 30%. The sample of small business purchasers required for the study was therefore, 350 ($n=350$). However the actual sample of OMs obtained initially were 500, in order to allow for non-participation.

Although the methods employed to obtain an appropriate sample of small business purchasers is arguably less than ideal, it should be noted that not knowing the exact size of the population is rarely a problem unless the size of the sample exceeds a few percent of the total population being examined (Simon, 2006). Simon therefore argues that for example a sample of 500 people is equally useful in examining the opinions of a state of 15,000,000 as it is a city of 10,000. Christensen (2006) also suggests that the accuracy of any investigation is more likely to depend on the way the sample is chosen, namely whether it is selected at random or selected via less accurate methods such as soliciting responses via newspapers and/or filling quotas of respondents. By contrast Robson, (1993) draws attention to way sample size is often determined by the type of analysis that the researcher intends to perform, where common techniques such as chi-square require minimum cell frequencies. The fact that the tests performed on the data generated by the questionnaire includes chi-square and other techniques that are difficult to conduct on small samples (Pallant, 2001), provides a further reason for the need to select a sample that is reasonably large.

As indicated in the previous section to form the main aggregate from which the sample of small business purchasers could be drawn it was first necessary to contact a number of commercial estate agents and accountants that operate in Torbay and Totnes (South Hams). Although this approach could double the potential for sampling error (Babbie, 1993), this was not considered a problem, as the sample was relatively large.

This particular method, based on appropriateness and ease of access, was employed because there is no pre-existing database for businesses that have been taken over as going-concerns from which a sampling frame could be drawn. All of the accountants and estate agents were randomly selected from *Yellow Pages* and *Thomson Local* directories. Having obtained the required number ($n=10$) each was asked to randomly select from their files fifty people who had purchased small businesses, providing a total of 500. Given that potential participants were widely dispersed geographically, this particular approach was considered the most effective way of obtaining the sample required (May, 1993; Sarantakos, 1998). The OMs selected would initially be contacted by telephone to explain the purpose of the study and determine whether they would be willing to participate.

Although the two locations (Torbay and Totnes) lie within just eighteen miles of each other, both are very different: Torbay being situated on the coast whereas Totnes (part of South Hams) is semi-rural. Each however is strongly influenced by the tourist industry albeit in different ways. For example whilst Torbay caters mainly for long-stay visitors (i.e. traditional holiday makers) Totnes remains a place of historical interest that is more likely to attract excursionists and sightseers. Torbay therefore contains a great many small hotels and guesthouses whilst Totnes comprises a large number of small retail outlets that tend to focus on local arts and crafts. However given that other small businesses in these two locations (e.g. tearooms and restaurants) tend to experience a significant rise in trade during the holiday season these firms are also strongly influenced by this particular industry.

As a preliminary evaluation of the questionnaire suggested that it might be too long, it was decided that there should be two questionnaires. Questionnaire #1 therefore contained the question (scale) that would indicate which skills are perceived as being the most important in regards to OM training (Q22), whilst Questionnaire #2 contained the questions (scales) that would identify (1) which skills that are the most important for successful small business ownership (Q22i) and (2) how the OMs perceive their current skills levels (Q22ii). From the sample of 350 OMs ($n=350$) 175 would receive Questionnaire #1 whilst 175 received Questionnaire #2. Despite there being two questionnaires they nevertheless remained fundamentally the same, the only difference being the aforementioned question(s). Statistical tests that did not involve these particular questions would therefore be conducted on the sample as a whole ($n=350$). However to facilitate this it was first necessary to alter several of the question numbers (after the data had been entered on to SPSS) as these needed to correspond exactly if the data was to be 'merged' for whole-sample analysis (Pallant, 2001). To avoid double counting, a second and separate file was created for each questionnaire (#1 and #2): the cases from Questionnaire #2 were then added to Questionnaire #1, ($n=350$). After this process had been completed a frequency table was produced which confirmed that the data sets had successfully been merged.

4.12. Questionnaire Design

The survey was designed to perform two main functions; the first being to test a number of propositions, the second to identify issues that required further research using a qualitative approach. The questionnaire therefore needed to identify the most frequently used sources of advice, the key skills that are perceived as being the most important to successful small business ownership; training uptake, the most popular form of training, the reason(s) for training abstention; the OMs perceptions of their skill

levels in specific key areas; whether a need exists for specialist OM training and which skills are perceived as being the most important for inclusion on OM training programmes. To determine (via the use of statistical analyses) whether the above variables are influenced by specific factors, the questionnaire also aimed to determine the movement of sales levels over the past twelve months; how respondents rated the success of the business; previous occupation; academic status; the length of time the business had been owned and whether respondents had owned a business previously.

Given that small business owner-managers are heterogeneous in nature (Goss, 1991; Martin & Staines, 1994; DTI, 1999a) the questionnaire design therefore needed to take into consideration (1) The personal circumstances of the individuals concerned (differences in social backgrounds, academic status etc.); (2) The type of information required (e.g. personal details, skill ratings), (3) The amount of time available to respondents for questionnaire completion.

It was also important to keep the questionnaire simple and straightforward as this would help avoid ambiguities and misunderstandings that could result in questions being answered incorrectly (Deutscher, 1977; Bell, 1993).

Although a great deal of attention was paid to the overall structure of the questionnaire (question order etc.), the wording of questions also required careful consideration, as they needed to stimulate and maintain respondents' interest (Hoinville & Jowell, 1987). Several attitude scales were also included as these are simple to understand and relatively easy to code. Although the questionnaire provided respondents with a fairly wide degree of latitude, great care was nevertheless taken in order to avoid introducing unnecessary complexities that might incur problems later.

The construction of the questionnaire presented relatively few problems, as the questions were basic and straightforward, unlike those which include research instruments that are designed for example to measure OM personality (e.g. Chell et al., 1991; Moran, 1998; White, 1999), which can be extremely complex. The straightforwardness of the design also ensured that the questionnaire would be relatively simple to code and analyse (Youngman, 1986),

A large proportion of the survey consisted of 'closed' questions', which asked respondents to select just one response category from those provided. As this can be restrictive (DeVaus, 1991), an open category ('other, please specify') was often included, as this would help to avoid the problem of non-response should any of the respondents fall outside the categories listed. Given that the OMs polled were likely to come from a wide range of backgrounds, the simplicity of the closed question format ensured that all respondents were able to represent themselves without fear of prejudice and/or discrimination: a consequence often associated with 'open questions' where the answers provided by well-educated participants may afford greater credibility (with the researcher) than those submitted by the less literate (De Vaus, 1991).

The two questions that were of a sensitive nature adopted a slightly different stance, as respondents may not have felt comfortable giving precise answers (Bell, 1993). The respondent's age (Q10 on both questionnaires) and the purchase price of the business (Q28 = Questionnaire #1, Q27 = Questionnaire #2) were therefore presented in the form of a 'range'.

The most important questions took the form of attitude scales, as these would determine which skills are perceived as being the most important and how respondents rate their own abilities within the areas specified. However in order to establish which skills respondents should be asked to rate, it was necessary to examine other similar studies which focused on (1) the key skills required for effective small business ownership; (2) common skill gaps amongst small firm owners and; (3) the key areas for skill development

Although these other studies made no reference to small firms that were purchased as going-concerns, the majority of researchers had used samples that comprised the businesses fraternity as a whole. These samples are therefore likely to include firms that were purchased as established enterprises.

Table 4.2 represents the skills that respondents were asked to rate in regards to (1) successful small firms ownership and (2) their current skill levels (Questionnaire #2).

Figure-work and accounting	Building good customer relations
Perceiving customer needs	Recruiting staff
Managing staff	Managing the business generally
Building good relationships with suppliers	Decision-making

Table 4.2. The skills that the OM were asked to rate (Questionnaire #2)

However to determine which skills respondents rated as being the most important for inclusion on OM training programmes (Questionnaire #1), the range was broadened slightly (Table 4.3.). This is because support and training is often required in a number of different areas including managing family members (Aronoff & Ward, 1993; Birley,

2002), time management (Kerr & MacDougall, 1999), legal issues (Stone, 1996; Sunderland, 1999; Whitney, 1999), selling (Romano & Ratnatunga, 1995), Information Technology (IT) (Wall, 2006), marketing (O'Neill, 1990; Romano & Ratnatunga, 1995; Geursen, 1996) and raising capital (Thompson & Gray, 1999; Huang & Brown, 1999). Although it could be argued that raising capital is neither a skill nor a competence, it is nevertheless an important consideration, as research has shown that OMs of established businesses often find it difficult to obtain finance (Thomson & Gray, 1999).

Finance/accounting	Managing the business generally
Hiring and recruiting staff	Managing staff
Dealing with suppliers	Marketing
Raising capital	Health & Safety issues
Legal issues	Managing family members
Time management	Building good customer relations
Making and 'closing' a sale	Using information technology

Table 4.3. The skills that respondents were asked to rate for inclusion on OM training programmes (Questionnaire#1)

The decision to omit 'business planning' (from all three lists) was made on the basis that the subject is too broad in scope for inclusion on a postal questionnaire. This particular issue will therefore be examined during the accountants' interviews (Phase 2 of the research).

For simplicity, each scale comprised five points (steps) including a 'neutral' midpoint. Although ten-point scales would make the categories sound less extreme (Oppenheim, 1992), this could however confuse respondents as some of the categories might be too

similar for them to differentiate. Given also that the respondents are likely to come from a wide range of educational backgrounds, five point scales, where each point is precisely defined, will ensure that the exercise remains uncomplicated.

To determine whether the items within each scale were measuring the same internal constructs, the Cronbach alpha values were examined; this being one of the most commonly used indicators of internal consistency. According to Pallant (2001), scales that have less than ten items can acceptably produce a Cronbach alpha coefficient as low as .5 whereas scales that have more than 10 items need to show a value of .7 or above (Nunnally, 1978).

Q22i and Q22ii which both contained eight items produced Cronbach values of .5 and .7 respectively, which suggests that the internal consistency is fairly good. By slight contrast Question 22, which contained a total of fourteen items, reported an alpha value of .66, which despite being lower is nevertheless acceptable, as the degree of latitude in such cases tends to be fairly wide; many researchers allowing a lenient cut-off point at .60 (Garson, 2005). Given also that the difference between the recommended alpha value (.7) and the value produced in this instance (.66) totalled less than half a scale point, retaining the scale in its present form is unlikely to present serious problems.

To further test the reliability of the scales, those who participated in the pilot test were asked to complete the scales again two weeks later, as this would determine the degree of temporal stability (Pallant, 2001). Given that both sets of results showed high test-retest correlations, (the answers being practically identical on both occasions) it was therefore concluded that the scales should produce fairly reliable, and therefore valid, results.

Given that attitude scales require a precise frame of reference and a detailed explanation of the rating procedure (Oppenheim, 1992), the treatment of these scales was therefore discussed with respondents when they were initially contacted (pre-survey). Specific instructions were also included on the questionnaire.

Acknowledging that small firm owners tend to assess their abilities differently from, for example, training providers (Curran & Stanworth, 1989), it was nevertheless decided that using an attitude scale would help to identify (1) common skill gaps and (2) the key areas for skill development. To enable respondents to feel confident in declaring skill shortfalls, a detailed explanation regarding why this particular question was included on the questionnaire was also provided during pre-survey contact. It was therefore made clear that the researcher was looking to determine (1) the aspects of small firm ownership that are likely to present the most difficulties and (2) which skills should be included on OM training/ support programmes

4.13. Piloting the Questionnaire

Based on the strategy put forward by De Vaus (1991) the construction of the questionnaire therefore comprised three main phases:

Question Development

This phase involved compiling a list of questions that would generate the information required. Particular attention was paid to the wording of the questions in order to avoid ambiguity and misunderstanding. The length of the questions was also taken into consideration, as they needed to be as short and precise as possible. .

Questionnaire Development

Having produced a total of thirty questions that covered the relevant issues, they were then arranged in logical order. This was an important aspect of the questionnaire design as the survey needed to retain the interest and enthusiasm of the respondents. Sensitive questions, namely the price the OMs paid for the business and how current sales levels compare to that of the previous year appeared towards the end of the questionnaire, the theory being that if any of the respondents decided to abandon the questionnaire at this point, the researcher would at least have answers to the previous questions (Bell, 1993). Having completed this process the questionnaire was then examined for any potential difficulties that could arise when the data was entered on to SPSS for analysis.

Polishing Pilot Test

To conduct a preliminary assessment of the survey as a whole, copies were disseminated to an initial sub-sample of eight people. Four of these were small business purchasers, whilst the others came from other professions and backgrounds. Each were asked (via a covering letter) to provide feedback concerning, question format; phraseology and terminology; font and typeface; reader-friendliness and the time taken to complete the questionnaire.

The questionnaires and feedback sheets were collected in person, as this would provide respondents with an opportunity to discuss, where necessary, possible alternative approaches to asking particular questions (Converse & Presser, 1986). Although the pilot test could have been carried out via face-to-face interviews, it was nevertheless decided that the questionnaire should be completed under the same conditions as those imposed on the working sample (i.e. in the respondents own environment and at a time which best suits them). With the researcher present it may also have been difficult to

determine the length of time it took to complete the survey, particularly if there were regular pauses to discuss specific queries. Although the presence of the researcher would also have made it possible to evaluate the questionnaire immediately after it had been completed, being aware that the he/she was 'waiting' may have resulted in the exercise being completed hastily, therefore increasing the likelihood of missing vital points.

The feedback revealed that there were no serious flaws in either the question format or phraseology. The length of the questionnaire(s) was also acceptable; the maximum amount of time spent completing it being twenty-four minutes.

The final questionnaire(s) therefore comprised a total of 30 questions; the majority of which these being 'closed questions' (Questionnaire #1 = 22, Questionnaire #2 = 23) the rest consisting of 'category' and 'scales' (Questionnaire #1 = 3, Questionnaire #2 = 4).

Although self-completion questionnaires were considered the most appropriate way of collecting the data required, it was nevertheless acknowledged that this particular method tends to generate low response rates (May, 1993; Paxson et al., 1995; Aldrich & Vahr, 1997; Dennis, 2003). However pre-survey contact has been shown to significantly increase response rates (Paxson et al., 1995; Roth & BeVier, 1998), which in this instance not only helped to establish a rapport, but also provided respondents with an opportunity to discuss the research and any queries they may have (Linsky, 1975, Bulmer, 1982). Including a contact telephone number on the questionnaire also ensured that those who may require additional information at a later date were able to obtain it.

The questionnaire was printed on white paper with plenty of space between each question. Two font sizes were used, 16 for question titles and 14 for questions. The main reason for using this particular format was to enhance the simple nature of the questionnaire, thereby avoiding the clinical look that such documents often exhibit (please refer to page A1 of the appendices). Given that recent research into response rates amongst small business owners shows that simple easy-to-understand formats are likely to produce higher response rates than those that are more elaborate (Dennis, 2003) provides further justification for adopting this particular approach. Further attempts to increase response rates included hand-written delivery envelopes, the inclusion of SAEs and a signed covering letter. Although Dennis's research showed that these 'treatments' are likely to make little difference, a significant number of studies conducted prior to this, suggest otherwise (e.g. Yammerino et al., 1991; Jobber & Saunders, 1993; Jobber & O'Reilly, 1998; Dillman, 2000).

The covering letter was placed on the first page of the survey, as this would avoid the risk of misplacement or loss. Incorporating it into the questionnaire also ensured that the information it contained (e.g. a contact telephone number) was accessible at all times. To distinguish between the two questionnaires, each had a small (but differing) illustration at the top of the first page in the form of an inkwell. This was considered preferable to using different coloured paper and/or ink, as this might have affected the overall look.

The survey was mailed to equal numbers of the randomly selected OMs based in the South Hams (N= 180) and Torbay (N= 180) with whom contact had already been established. After a period of three weeks (the time specified for questionnaire completion) telephone calls were made to those who had failed to respond in order to

determine whether participants had actually received questionnaires or whether there were other circumstances to account for the lack of response. As respondents had already been contacted via this method (pre-survey) it was felt that this approach would be preferable to sending out reminder letters and/or a second wave of questionnaires. Moreover re-establishing personal contact offers greater flexibility for negotiation and discussion than that afforded by written correspondence.

Whilst speaking with the OMs concerned, much emphasis was placed on the value of their input and the good response rates that the survey had generated to date. As appeals made by university-based researchers have been shown to produce extremely good results (White, 1999), the reason for employing this tactic is therefore evident.

The final response rate totalled 97%, which is clearly an extremely high percentage given the low response rates postal surveys generally yield. However the high level of response was attributed to the appropriateness of the questionnaire design and the effectiveness of the groundwork (i.e. pre-survey contact), which clearly stimulated the interest of OMs, the majority of which indicated that they were willing to participate in further research. The fact that the researcher had a great deal of experience in dealing directly with the public (including 'cold' canvassing) is also likely to have influenced the level of response.

Given that there were no returns from the post office and that none of the firms had ceased trading non-response ($n=20$), was therefore attributed to personal reasons.

4.14. The Accountants Interviews (Phase 2 of the Research)

To obtain a different perspective of small business ownership, it was decided that information should also be obtained from a group of individuals who could provide a professional insight into the key issues that affect small firms. The individuals concerned therefore need to be familiar with: the problems facing small firms; the skills required for successful small business ownership; common skill shortages; support provision, the operational differences between start-ups and businesses that have been purchased as going-concerns; the use and effectiveness of public sector support provision; the most effective ways of developing OM skills and whether those who purchase established enterprises have particular support and training needs.

To determine how the support and training needs of those who purchase established businesses differs from those launching new enterprises the key differences between the two subgroups also need to be examined.

The way the qualitative phase of the research helps to validate the results yielded by the questionnaires is illustrated in Table 4.4, which draws attention to the limitations surveys often impose and how the collation of supporting qualitative data can broaden the overall scope of the research.

4.15. Selecting an Appropriate Method of Data Collection (qualitative)

Although there are several ways of collecting qualitative data, many are unsuitable for use with samples that are widely dispersed geographically and/or where there are constraints that make it difficult to organise activities such as focus groups. Even if it were possible to conduct interviews via a 'live' Internet link-up it would have been difficult to find a number of individuals that were all available simultaneously. It was

Research Strategy	General Form of Research Question	Does It Require "Tight Control" over Behavioural Events?	Does It Focus On Contemporary Events?
Experiment	how, why	yes	yes
Survey	who, what, where, how many, how much	no	yes
Archival (existing data, vs. data generated by the researcher) analysis	who, what, where, how many, how much	no	yes/no
History	how, why	no	no
Case Study	how, why	no	yes

Source: Yin, 1994

Table 4.4. The different types of data obtained by quantitative and qualitative research methods

therefore decided that face-to-face interviews would be the most effective way of collecting the information required as this method is more flexible than those described above, particularly as it is possible to arrange meetings at time that best suits the interviewees.

From the choice of interview (i.e. the unstructured, semi-structured and structured interview), it was decided that the semi-structured format would generate the best results. Although unstructured interviews are capable of providing a great deal of information, this type of interview can nevertheless be time consuming as interviewees have the freedom to create their own frames of reference (May, 1993; Robson, 1993). By contrast structured interviews tend to be used for the collection of quantitative data and therefore do not allow interviewees the wide degrees of latitude afforded by unstructured and/or semi-structured interviews (Bell, 1993; May, 1993). Given that a survey had been conducted previously, this particular method would merely replicate the information obtained from this source. It was therefore decided that the interviews should be semi-structured, as this particular format '*...sits within the middle of a continuum of formality*' (Grebenik & Moser, 1962:16). The researcher is therefore able

to collate a great deal of information whilst retaining a distinct frame of reference (Fielding, 1988).

Although interviews are clearly a rich source of data (Seidman, 1991; Witzel, 2000) there are nevertheless a number of factors that can have a detrimental affect on the outcomes of research conducted via this method. Firstly the reliability of the answers needs to be considered, which might be inaccurate for a number of reasons (May, 1993). May suggests that whilst the accounts are often a genuine reflection of the interviewee's thoughts or experiences, there may be circumstances and/or events surrounding these experiences of which the individual was not aware. May also argues that although a great deal of information can be obtained through the use of interviews, they cannot provide the level of understanding that is achieved through direct observation. Accepting that it is often difficult to use previous knowledge to develop questions without obscuring the original view of the respondent Witzel (2000) nevertheless draws attention to the complex conversation strategy that needs to be employed if story-telling is to be encouraged. The effectiveness of the interviews and the resultant data is therefore largely dependent on the technique of the researcher (Seidman, 1991). Looking at how best to achieve a precise and authentic record of the communication process Witzel (2000) suggests that tape recordings are the most effective as they allow the interviewer '*...to concentrate completely on the discussion and on observing situation related conditions and nonverbal expressions*' (p.9). Given that the majority of interviewees who participated in the study did not wish the interview to be recorded, the negative effect this could have on the overall outcome cannot be ignored, even though great care was taken to ensure accuracy.

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4.16. Selecting a Sample for the Interviews

With regards to the sample size for qualitative data collection, there are a number of differing viewpoints concerning the number of cases required to ensure validity and rigour. Eisenhardt (1989) for example suggests that researchers need to select enough cases to develop theory but that researchers '*...should stop adding cases when theoretical saturation is reached...*' (p.537). By contrast Glaser & Strauss (1967) define theoretical saturation as the point at which incremental learning is minimal because the researchers are witnessing phenomena that has been observed earlier on in the study. Although it may be concluded that there is no ideal number of cases it has nevertheless been suggested that a selection of '*...between 4 and 10 ... usually works well*' (Eisenhardt 1989:545) and will enable the researcher to obtain data that is "information rich" (Patton, 1990). The proposed sample size in this instance was therefore based on the maximum number suggested by Eisenhardt (ten). However to allow for cancellations, withdrawals and the fact that theoretical saturation may not have been reached (Glaser & Strauss; Eisenhard, 1989) it was decided that twelve subjects should be obtained.

4.17. Selecting a Sample of Professionals

When deciding on the type of professionals that should be interviewed, three possibilities were considered: (1) Bank managers/advisers (who specialise in small businesses); (2) Personal Business Advisors (PBAs) who work with public sector support providers and (3) Accountants who are experienced in dealing with small firms

Given that the interviewees needed to possess an extensive knowledge of small firms, the best results would be obtained from individuals who are in a position to form close, long term professional relationships with small business owners.

Although Personal Business Advisors (PBAs) are likely to be a valuable source of information regarding small firms, their knowledge of the particular issues raised here may nevertheless be limited as research shows that these individuals are rarely able to establish close relationships with their clients (Bennett & Robson, 1999a; Gooderham et al., 2004).

By contrast the decision to exclude bank managers was based on the conclusion that this particular source of advice is likely to be biased towards the avoidance and/or reduction of financial risk (Mole, 2002). The information obtained from this particular source is therefore likely to be significantly influenced by this factor



Fig. 4.1. The most frequently used sources of business advice

Although it could be argued that accountants are also highly focused on the financial aspects of small business management (Gibb, 2000) their stance is contextually different from that of bank-managers as their clients are not beholden to them in the same way. Given also that accountants are frequently asked for advice on a wide range of issues relating to small firm ownership (Kirby & King, 1997; Greenwood et al., 2002; Gooderham et al., 2004) and that they are rapidly becoming recognised as the

'new' business consultants (Gooderham et al., 2004) it was therefore concluded that these individuals are probably familiar with most aspects of small business ownership. The fact that it has been established that many small business owners perceive their accountant as integral to the business (Marriott & Marriott, 2000) further indicates that these people are in a position to provide detailed information on small firms. However the most influential factor in deciding to interview accountants came from the results generated by the survey, which showed that these professionals are the most frequently used source of advice (Fig. 4.1.).

Although information could have been collated from all three of the aforementioned sources, it was nevertheless concluded that accountants would be more familiar with the finer aspects of small business ownership that this study aims to explore.

The sample of accountants was also purposively selected; the method of selection being the same as that used for the OM interviews, which used cases (OMs) that are significantly different. However in this instance the differences lie in the size of the organisation in which the accountants operate and the length of time they have spent working with small firms. The sample of accountants therefore comprised one individual who operated within a national organisation; four individuals who operated within small local companies and five individuals who worked alone. The amount of time they had spent working with small firms ranged from two to eighteen years. All of the interviewees were male, although not by choice, the main objective being to obtain a varied sample of accountants who were actively involved with small firms.

However to obtain the required sample (approximately twelve) it was first necessary to contact a number of accountants from *Yellow Pages* and *Thomson's Local* directories in

order to determine what experience they had in dealing with small firms and whether they would be willing to participate in the study. This also provided an opportunity to discuss the purpose of the research and the amount of time that was required to conduct the interview. Unfortunately it was only possible to obtain ten interviewees as the others were constrained by work and other commitments.

4.18. Interview Plan and Content

To enable comparisons to be made with the results generated by the survey (Phase 1 of the research) the accountants’ interviews therefore focused on the key issues presented in Table 4.5.

An interview matrix, which provides full details of the questions posed, is located on page A227 of the appendices.

The problems facing small firms (general and contextual)
The skills required for successful small business ownership
Common skill gaps and the action that could be taken to address the problem of skills shortage
Whether those who purchase established enterprises would benefit from particular support and/or training
The utilisation and effectiveness of support providers (e.g. Business Link)
The role of training (informal and formal)
The differences between taking over an established business and launching a new venture
The role of accountants as support providers/business advisers

Table 4.5. The key issues examined during the accountants interviews

The main objective of the interviews was to obtain information that could be compared and contrasted with the results generated by the survey and the OM interviews. It was therefore necessary to gain insight into the problems small firms are likely to face and determine whether those who purchase established businesses are likely to encounter particular difficulties. The skills that are considered essential for successful small business ownership (successful in this instance being defined as profitable and having the potential to grow) also need to be identified and whether those who purchase established enterprises are likely to require particular skills. The subsequent findings will be compared with the results generated by the survey and the OM interviews, to determine whether the skill priorities are the same in both instances or whether the OMs perceptions of the skills required for successful small business ownership differ significantly from the suggestions put forward by the accountants (i.e. professional outsiders).

The interviews also examine the key differences between new ventures and established firms that were purchased as going-concerns, as this will help to identify areas where particular support may be required. For example the research might show that those who purchase established businesses tend to experience difficulties with regards to inheriting staff and/or sustaining levels of trade. If this is the case then there may be a need for support that will help OMs to resolve these particular problems. Whether the accountants perceive a need for support and training that is designed to accommodate those who purchase established enterprises therefore also needs to be determined together with the type of facilities that should be available. An indication will then be provided of whether the development, and subsequent implementation, of such programmes is justified.

By examining ways that skill shortage might be addressed, including the potential benefits afforded by training, it will be possible to determine whether skill development could effectively be approached via this method. Identifying the learning and knowledge sources that are the most beneficial to small firm owners is also important, as this will provide an indication of the type of support and training required. By comparing these findings to the results generated by the OM interviews and the survey it will be possible to determine learning 'ideals', which can be used to help develop strategies for skill development and ongoing learning.

The interview questions therefore enable the researcher to examine these issues in depth, although each is retained within a specific frame of reference. To avoid omitting key points and/or issues that need to be examined in more detail, the question matrix (page A227 of the appendices) will also be used as a 'prompt'.

4.19. Ethical Considerations

As with all research the majority of ethical considerations arise from the questions asked and the methods used to seek answers (Robson, 1993). However Robson suggests that the most serious breaches of ethics are likely to occur when the research does not give individuals the choice of whether or not they participate. Although there may be grounds for adopting a covert approach, when for example the researcher believes that acting overtly will result in the subjects altering their behaviour, failing to obtain their consent nevertheless means that the individuals right not to participate has been removed. With regards to this study all of the OMs and accountants (participants) were provided with full details of the context and purpose of the research when they were initially contacted by telephone; the purpose of the call being to establish whether or not the individual in question would be prepared to participate in the study. They

were also provided with information with regards to their anonymity and how the research would be presented, (i.e. that names would not be revealed and that any direct quotations that were used [with their permission] would be attributed to an interviewee number.

Given that the research methods employed are overt (a postal questionnaire and face-to-face interviews) the dilemmas that often face researchers who act covertly (Lincoln & Cuba, 1985; Kimmel, 1988) therefore did not apply. In addition to protecting the participants' anonymity they were also informed of their right to withdraw from the research at any time. Although this clearly applied to all of those who took part, particular care was taken to ensure that the interviewees were aware that they could withdraw from the interview/decline to answer particular questions should they wish to do so.

4.20. Summary

This chapter has attempted to provide insight into the methodologies most frequently employed in small business research (White, 1999). A detailed explanation is also provided regarding the methods of data collection employed in this instance and why, given the research objectives and propositions, a multi-method approach is the most appropriate. Although there are clearly a number of advantages that may be afforded by collating quantitative and qualitative data, attention is nevertheless drawn to the potential problems that can arise when undertaking this type of research.

Full details have been provided regarding the locations in which the study took place, including the way that each is strongly influenced by tourism. Detailed explanations have been provided in regards to the types of questions posed and the way the

questionnaire was used to identify areas that required further examination. The chapter also documents the benefits afforded by obtaining an alternative viewpoint from professionals who are actively involved with small firms.

The following Chapter therefore examines the results generated by the questionnaire (Phase 1 of the research) and describes the various tests that were performed on the data. The chapter also discusses briefly to what degree the propositions are supported and highlights the issues that need to be examined in more detail via qualitative research (Phase 2).

CHAPTER 5

Phase 1 Results: The OM Survey

5.1. Introduction

From the 500 OMs contacted initially, questionnaires were received from all of those (n=350) who had agreed to participate in the survey. All of the data was entered on to SPSS and preliminary analyses were conducted (Descriptive Statistics/Frequencies). However the output revealed that several of the response categories contained very low figures. Given that some of the tests, for example Chi-square, require minimum cell frequencies (Pallant, 2001) it was therefore necessary to recode some of the categories before more these tests could be performed.

The first test was the Chi-Square test for independence (Crosstabs), which was used to explore the relationship between specific pairs of variables to establish whether further tests were required. Where a significant result was obtained one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) or multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed to establish the variability within each of the groups tested. In instances where the output indicated that there was a statistically significant difference amongst the groups, post hoc tests were performed to determine which of the groups differed.

In the case of MANOVA this involved applying a Bonferroni adjustment, namely dividing the original alpha level (usually .05) by the number of analyses carried out (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). This particular adjustment is commonly used in multiple comparison procedures to calculate an adjusted probability alpha of comparison-wise type 1 error from the desired probability alpha of family-wise type 1 error

(statistics.com, 2006). The calculation guarantees that the adjusted alpha in pairwise comparisons keeps the actual probability alpha of family-wise type 1 error not higher than the desired level. However with regards to ANOVA a statistically significant difference required an examination of the post-hoc tests, namely the Tukey HSD (honestly significant difference) test (Pallant, 2001). Although this process is similar to running a series of t-tests, the post hoc tests are more stringent than regular t-tests. This is due to the fact that the more tests the researcher performs the more likely it is that a significant difference will be found by chance (Hall, 2007). By performing these particular tests it is therefore possible to determine (1) which mean scores are significantly different from the other mean scores and (2) the actual scores of the groups.

Given that the research proposes that the skill priorities of those who purchase established enterprises are influenced by business type (Proposition 2), and previous experience of small business ownership (Proposition 3) MANOVA and ANOVA were considered the most appropriate tests as they enable the researcher to compare the variance (variability in scores) between the different groups (believed to be due to the independent variable) with the variability within each of the groups (believed to be due to chance). It is therefore possible to determine whether, for example the type of business respondents' own influences skill prioritisation. For the purpose of this study MANOVA was used to test specific sets of variables to compare groups on a different range of characteristics whilst ANOVA was used to compare the variability in scores between different groups. However these two tests are parametric tests and therefore make a number of assumptions. Although the relatively large sample size (i.e. 30+) suggested that the data would tolerate assumption violations concerning normal distribution (Stevens, 1996: Gravetter & Wallnau, 2000), the significant difference in

groups sizes indicated that a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variance would not be tolerated (Stevens, 1996). Where the output from MANOVA showed that assumptions had been violated it was therefore necessary to set a more stringent alpha level (.025) and use the output from Pillai's Trace (as opposed to Wilk's Lambda), as this particular test is more robust when assumptions have been violated (Pallant, 2001) and/or there are departures from normality (Upton et al., 2005). Pillai's Trace is designed to perform the same function as Wilks's Lambda, which is a probability distribution used in multivariate hypothesis testing (Mardia et al., 1979).

However where assumptions had been violated in ANOVA the non-parametric alternative (Kruskal-Wallis) was performed, as this type of test has less stringent requirements (Pallant, 2001). The Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance is also used for testing equality of population medians among groups. Intuitively it is identical ANOVA with the data replaced by their ranks (Kruskal & Wallis, 1952). However being a non-parametric test it is less sensitive than parametric tests and may therefore fail to detect differences between variables that actually exist (Pallant, 2001). All of the above tests were performed using SPSS (Version 14.0), which is a powerful data analysis package that is capable of performing a wide range of statistical procedures including those which are regarded as being very complex (e.g. two-way analysis of covariance) (Pallant, 2001).

The way these tests relate to the research objectives and propositions is shown on the test matrix, which is located on page A17 of the appendices.

5.2. Examining Relationships Through Cross-tabulation

Given the nature of the research objectives (p.139) it was necessary to examine the various factors that are likely to influence, skill prioritisation, training uptake, preferred methods of training and the OM's perceptions of their skill levels.

These variables were therefore crosstabulated with business type, previous occupation, academic status, ownership status, employee numbers, the length of time the business had been owned and whether the respondent had owned a business previously. To determine whether training was likely to take place in the future, attitudes towards future training were also tested against the above variables. Similarly to establish whether skill prioritisation was influenced by the type of business respondents owned, previous ownership of a business and/or the length of time the business had been owned, cross-tabulations were performed using the key skills listed on the questionnaire (please refer to p.A1 of the appendices).

Training uptake was also crosstabulated with the OM's ratings of the firm's success and movement/non-movement in sales levels (compared to the previous year) as this would show whether the uptake of training influenced the firm's performance. However as it could not be guaranteed that the respondents were measuring success against this particular factor, sales levels were crosstabulated with the OM's ratings of the firm's success, as this would provide an indication of whether these two variables are linked.

5.3. Examining Between-Group Differences Using MANOVA & ANOVA

The results from the cross-tabulations suggested that further analyses were required using more robust tests that would enable the researcher to compare several dependent

variables and determine whether any differences between the groups had occurred by chance. The type of test used (i.e. MANOVA or ANOVA/Kruskal Wallis) was determined by the number of groups (levels) present on the independent variable.

5.4. General Findings

The general findings are based on the output from preliminary analyses (Descriptive Statistics), which were used to explore the nature of the variables in readiness for the statistical tests described above (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2000). Particular attention was therefore paid to the output from Frequencies, as this enabled the researcher to check the minimum and maximum values; the number of valid cases; and the number/percentage of cases that fell into each of the categories (Pallant, 2001).

5.4i. The Business

The most popular type of business purchased was in tourism, 45% of respondents choosing to purchase a business in this sector. The second most popular choice was retail (35%), followed by professional services (21%). Notably none of the OMs who participated in the survey were involved in manufacturing, information technology (IT), engineering or agriculture.

The majority of respondents paid between £51,000 and 100,000 for the business (44%). From the remaining OMs, 13% paid £100,000 or more; 27% paid between £26,000 and £50,000 and 16% paid less than £25,000. The majority of respondents purchased the business through an estate agent (60%) whilst the remaining 40% were private sales. Most of the business purchases were funded through a bank loan or similar (80%); the remaining 20% being funded by personal savings. The reasons for purchasing a business tended to vary. For example 37% claimed that they had spotted a good

business opportunity whilst 38% indicated that they were fulfilling the need for independence. The remaining respondents (25%) suggested that the purchase had been spawned by personal reasons namely ill health and/or being unable to secure employment).

73% of respondents had purchased the business with a partner (usually a spouse), the remaining respondents (27%) being sole purchasers. 60% of the respondents employed between 1 and 10 people, whilst 40% had no staff. From those with employees 54% employed less than 10 people. The majority of OMs had not owned a business previously (71%). From the 29% that had, 63% were businesses that had been purchased as going concerns whilst 37% were started from scratch. With regards to the length of time the current business had been owned, most of the respondents had owned the business for between 19 and 36 months. From the remaining respondents 29% had owned the business for 0-18 months, whilst 16% had owned the business for 3 years or longer.

5.4ii. Personal Details

The majority of OMs were aged between 31 and 50 (77%). From the remaining respondents, 12% were aged between 16 and 30 whilst 11% were aged 51 or over. The OMs' previous occupation varied considerably amongst the sample (Figure 5.1), the majority of respondents having been engaged in full time employment that was different from that of their business.

Although a large number of OMs had been in full time employment (50%) just 17% had been employed in the same industry as their business. Whilst 16% of the OMs

surveyed held no formal qualifications, 84% possessed GCSE's or above; just under half (42%) holding a degree or a diploma.



Fig. 5.1. The OM's previous occupation

5.4iii. Education and Training

Despite the number of OM's with formal qualifications the uptake of training in conjunction with buying the business was generally low, just 15% of respondents having undergone training for this purpose. The results also showed that most of the training was technical (52%), just 24% of respondents having undergone management training. However 24% of OM's had taken management and technical training. Most of the training was in the form of an HNC/HND (45%), whilst 19% enabled the respondents to gain a degree or a diploma. Notably just 6% of the OM's that took training obtained an NVQ. The remaining respondents (30%) claimed that they had taken 'other' (unspecified) forms of training.

Most of the training was taken by the OM who completed the questionnaire (56%). From the remaining OM's who had taken training 30% claimed that they and the co-

owner had taken training, whilst 14% indicated that the co-owner alone had taken training. The majority of the training had been delivered via seminars (31%), evening classes (26%) or part time courses (17%). Only 7% had participated in day-release courses and/or distance learning (6%). 72% of the training was self-funded, whilst 21% was government funded. The remaining 7% of OMs had funded their training via 'other means'.

With regards to the timing, most of the training took place prior to the purchase of the business (52%) whilst 28% took place following the purchase. The remaining OMs who took training (20%) did so before and after the business was purchased. The majority of those who had taken training claimed that it had been 'beneficial' (48%) and/or 'very beneficial' (48%). Just 2% of the OMs indicated that the training had been 'neither beneficial or unbeneficial'. Notably none of the respondents suggested that the training had been 'unbeneficial'.

The survey showed that the low uptake of training was mainly due to time constraints, 59% of the respondents who had not taken training claiming that this was the reason they had abstained. From the remaining OMs 9% cited financial restrictions whilst 18% indicated that there were 'other reasons'. Significantly just 13% expressed a disinterest in training. When asked whether it was likely that training would take place in the future 51% suggested that it would 'definitively not', whilst 47% remained unsure. By contrast just 2% suggested that they would 'definitely' take training in the future. Despite the low uptake of training 77% of the OMs surveyed indicated that there should be training programmes for those who purchase established enterprises. When asked what form this training should take 43% suggested evening classes, 25% distance

learning and 20% day-release programmes. Notably just 10% indicated that this type of training could be delivered via an NVQ.

With regards to support and assistance the most popular source of advice were accountants (43%), followed by bank managers (32%) (Figure 5.2)

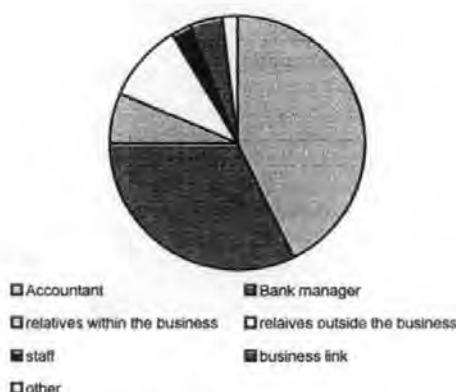


Figure 5.2. The most frequently used source of advice

5.4iv. Business Performance and Perceptions of Success

64% of the OMs surveyed rated the firm as 'successful'. From the remaining respondents 21% claimed the firm was 'very successful', whilst 15% stated that the firm was 'neither successful nor unsuccessful'. Notably none of the respondents suggested that the business was 'unsuccessful'. In regards to movements in sales levels (when compared to that of the previous year) the results indicated that in the majority of cases sales had either remained unchanged (40%) or had increased by 1-10% (37%). By contrast just 13% had experienced an increase in sales of 10% or above. The scores for those who had experienced a decline in sales was also comparatively low, the number of instances where sales had declined by 1 - 10% totalling 8%. However the

number of OMs who had experienced a decline in sales of 10% or above totalled just 2%.

5.4v. Skill Prioritisation

Table 5.1 shows the way skills were rated for inclusion on OM training programmes that have been designed to assist those who purchase established enterprises. The key areas for development are finance, general management, and customer relations, each of which scored above 80% in the 'extremely important' category. Managing staff, marketing, and recruiting staff, were also perceived as being important, these skills scoring between 70%-80% in this particular category. By contrast dealing with suppliers, IT, selling, time management, legal issues, managing family members and health & safety issues were not highly prioritised, a significant number of OMs claiming that these skills are 'neither important or unimportant'. Dealing with suppliers, health and safety issues and managing family members, also produced the highest scores in the 'unimportant' category.

	Extremely Important	Important	Neither Important or unimportant	Unimportant	Extremely unimportant	Mean
Finance	68	30	2			1.34
Gen man	72	24	4			1.31
Rec staff	22	49	24	5		2.14
Man staff	44	34	21	1		1.80
DI suppliers	16	23	35	21	4	2.75
Marketing	21	50	22	6	1	2.17
Raising cap	40	41	16	2	1	1.85
H&S	17	31	29	14	9	2.65
Legal issues	23	34	31	9	3	2.34
Man family	18	27	37	16	2	2.57
Cust rels	64	20	14	1	1	1.55
Selling	23	31	30	9	7	2.44
Time man	25	32	36	6	1	2.26
IT	16	28	35	20	1	2.62

Table 5.1. The way skills were rated for inclusion on OM training programmes designed for those who purchase established enterprises

Looking at the way skills were prioritised for successful small business management, Table 5.2 shows that the most important skills are having the ability to build good customer relations and being able to perceive customer needs, over 50% of the OMs surveyed indicating that these skills are 'extremely important'. Although accounting was perceived as being 'extremely important' by just 30% of respondents, 61% indicated that this particular skill was 'important'. By contrast managing the business generally, making decisions and managing staff produced scores of around 50%. Notably very few of the OMs indicated that the skills listed were 'unimportant' and/or 'extremely unimportant'.

	Extremely Important	Important	Neither important or unimportant	Unimportant	Extremely unimportant	Mean
Accounting	30	61	7	2		1.81
Building customer relations	66	31	3			1.37
Dealing with suppliers	32	35	17	9	7	2.23
Perceiving customer needs	50	37	13			1.63
Recruiting staff	45	38	11	3	2	1.78
Managing Staff	40	47	11	2		1.75
Managing the business	42	52	6			1.65
Making decisions	46	49	5			1.61

Table 5.2. The prioritisation of skills for successful ownership of a business that was purchased as an established enterprise

Preliminary analyses of the way skills are prioritised with regards to (1) successful small business ownership and (2) inclusion on OM training programmes clearly provides insight into the skills that are the most important to those who purchase established enterprises. However it cannot be assumed that the ratings are based on the impact that these skills may have on the financial performance of the firm as the respondents might not be measuring success against this particular factor. Although this issue is explored in more depth during the OM interviews (Stage 2 of the research),

perceptions of success were crosstabulated with movements in sales levels (compared to that of the previous year) in order to determine whether the firm's financial performance was likely to act as a success indicator. The results showed that whilst a large number of OMs who had experienced an increase in sales claimed the business was 'very successful' (40%), 9% remained indifferent. Similarly from the OMs who had experienced a decline in sales of more than 10%, 5% stated that the business was 'very successful'. However the most important figures were those produced by the OMs who experienced a decline in sales of less than 10%, where of 22% rated the business as 'successful'. It is therefore concluded that a significant number of the OMs surveyed measure success against factors that are unrelated the firm's financial performance.

5.4vi. Skill Levels

	Very adequately skilled	Adequately skilled	Neither adequately Or inadequately skilled	Inadequately skilled	Very Inadequately skilled	Mean
Figure work	15	57	25	3		2.16
Building customer relations	27	62	10	1		1.85
Dealing with suppliers	19	53	25	2		2.10
Perceiving customer needs	30	55	14	2		1.87
Recruiting staff	26	47	25	2		2.03
Managing Staff	30	49	18	3	1	1.97
Managing the business	33	53	14			1.81
Making decisions	37	52	10			1.73

Table 5.3. The OMs personal perceptions of their current skill levels

Table 5.3 shows how the respondents perceived their skill levels in a number of key areas. Notably the majority of OMs claimed that they were 'adequately skilled' in all of the key areas listed, the scores ranging from 47% - 62%. In regards to being 'very

adequately skilled' it was decision making that produced the highest score (37%) followed by managing the business generally (33%), perceiving customer needs (30%) and managing staff (30%). The lowest scores in this category were dealing with suppliers (19%) and figure work (15%). The areas that produced the highest scores for being 'neither adequately or inadequately skilled' were dealing with suppliers (25%), figure work (25%), and recruiting staff (25%) followed by managing staff (18%), perceiving customer needs (14%) and managing the business generally (14%).

5.5. The Results Yielded by the Tests Used to Compare Groups

This section examines the results of the tests used to compare the groups of variables described on the Analyses Matrix (p. A17 of the appendices). Given that MANOVA and ANOVA generated a significant amount of output, the results are therefore presented via summary tables. These tables are preceded by a brief discussion of the results produced by preliminary analyses of the data (Chi-Square/Crosstabs). The output from all of tests can be found on page A18 of the appendices

The first test looked to determine whether previous occupation had an influence on the type of business purchased. If for example the test showed that the respondents were more likely to purchase a business in an industry with which they were familiar, this could have an effect on (1) skill prioritisation and (2) perceptions of training needs. However the output from Chi Square indicated that there were no significant differences between the groups tested. ANOVA also showed that there were no statistically significant differences at the $p < .05$ level in scores for the three business types (p.130) . This result is reflected in the output from Descriptive statistics (Table 5.4), the difference between the mean scores totalling less than one scale point (Table 5.5)

Business type					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6.653	5	1.331	1.715	.130
Within Groups	266.847	344	.776		
Total	273.500	349			

Table 5.4. Test results for significant associations between previous occupations and business type

Business type				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
FT employment same industry as business	61	2.1311	.88460	.11326
FT employment different industry as business	115	2.1652	.89766	.08371
FT or PT education	66	2.0606	.87493	.10770
unemployed	24	2.0417	.85867	.17528
self employed	25	1.6400	.81035	.16207
other	59	2.2034	.88629	.11538
Total	350	2.1000	.88525	.04732

Table 5.5. Descriptives

It is therefore concluded that the OM's previous occupation did not influence their choice of business.

5.5i. Training uptake

This section focuses on factors that are likely to influence the uptake of training and/or attitudes towards future training. The results of these tests are particularly important as one of the main objectives of the research is to construct a framework that can be used to assist skill development and ongoing learning. Given also that the majority of respondents (77%) were in favour of training programmes that will assist those who

purchase established enterprises, it is necessary to identify factors that might inhibit the uptake of such training should it become available.

The tests used to determine whether training uptake was influenced by business type showed that there was a statistically significant difference amongst the groups tested, the sig. value produced by Chi Square totalling less than .05 ($p=.024$). Further tests using Kruskal Wallis produced similar results, the output showing that there was a significant difference in training uptake across the different business types ($p=.025$). An inspection of the mean ranks for the groups revealed that retail services had the highest scores for training uptake with professional services reporting the lowest (Table 5.6).

	Business type	N	Mean Rank
Training taken	retail services	121	188.04
	professional services	73	166.54
	tourism	156	169.97
	Total	350	

Table 5.6. Ranks

By contrast the tests used to determine whether business type influenced attitudes towards future training showed that there were no significant differences at the $p<.05$ level across the groups tested, the output from Kruskal-Wallis recording a sig. Value of .29

Tests performed to determine whether age influenced the uptake of training also produced a negative result, the results from Chi-Square and Kruskal-Wallis showing that there were no significant differences at the $<.05$ level across the groups tested ($p=.086$).

However attitudes towards future training were influenced by age, the output from Kruskal-Wallis showing that there was a significant difference in attitudes towards future training across the different age groups at the $p < .05$ level ($p = .001$). An inspection of the mean ranks for the groups suggests that the older group (56 or over) had the highest scores with the younger group reporting the lowest (Table 5.7).

	Age	N	Mean Rank
future training	16-35	43	151.64
	36-55	268	172.63
	56 or over	39	221.54
	Total	350	

Table 5.7. Ranks

Notably ownership status had very little influence on the uptake of training, the results from Chi-Square showing that there was no significant difference at the $p < .05$ level. MANOVA also showed that there were no statistically significant differences at the $p < .05$ level between sole ownership and co-ownership on the combined dependent variables ($p = .079$) (Table 5.8). It is therefore concluded that ownership status is unlikely to influence training uptake and/or attitudes towards future training.

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
j4	Pillai's Trace	.015	2.557(b)	2.000	345.000	.079
	Wilks' Lambda	.985	2.557(b)	2.000	345.000	.079
	Hotelling's Trace	.015	2.557(b)	2.000	345.000	.079
	Roy's Largest Root	.015	2.557(b)	2.000	345.000	.079

Table 5.8. Results from tests used to determine significant associations between training uptake, attitudes towards future training and ownership status

By contrast tests performed to determine whether the presence of employees influenced training uptake and/or attitudes towards future training revealed that there was a

statistically significant difference amongst the groups tested, MANOVA (Pillai's trace) producing a score lower than the .025 alpha level (Table 5.9). However when the results for the dependent variables were considered separately the only difference to reach statistical significance using a Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of .0125 was the uptake of training (Table 5.10). Although the difference in the mean scores was less than one scale point, it is nevertheless concluded that the take up of training is influenced by the presence of employees.

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
j5	Pillai's Trace	.024	4.245(b)	2.000	347.000	.015
	Wilks' Lambda	.976	4.245(b)	2.000	347.000	.015
	Hotelling's Trace	.024	4.245(b)	2.000	347.000	.015
	Roy's Largest Root	.024	4.245(b)	2.000	347.000	.015

Table 5.9. The results from tests used to determine significant associations between training uptake, attitudes towards future training and the presence of employees

Source	Dependent variable	Type III Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
J5	Training taken	1.052	1	1.052	8.205	.004
	Future training	.030	1	.030	.103	.749

Table 5.10. Significant associations between the take up of training, attitudes towards future training and the presence of employees

Although the presence of employees could be linked to the uptake of training, previous ownership of a business had no influence on training uptake and/or attitudes towards future training, the output from Chi-Square and MANOVA (Pillai's trace) showing that there were no significant differences at the $p < .05$ level ($p = .073$) (Table 5.11)

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
q6	Pillai's Trace	.015	2.641(b)	2.000	347.000	.073
	Wilks' Lambda	.985	2.641(b)	2.000	347.000	.073
	Hotelling's Trace	.015	2.641(b)	2.000	347.000	.073
	Roy's Largest Root	.015	2.641(b)	2.000	347.000	.073

Table 5.11. Results from the tests used to determine significant associations between training uptake, attitudes towards future training and previous ownership of a business

The respondent's academic status also had little impact on the uptake of training and attitudes towards future training; the results generated by Chi-Square and MANOVA (Table 5.12) showing that there were no significant differences between the groups at the $p < .05$ level.

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
a12	Pillai's Trace	.002	.363(b)	2.000	347.000	.696
	Wilks' Lambda	.998	.363(b)	2.000	347.000	.696
	Hotelling's Trace	.002	.363(b)	2.000	347.000	.696
	Roy's Largest Root	.002	.363(b)	2.000	347.000	.696

Table 5.12. Results from tests used to determine significant associations between training uptake, attitudes towards future training and academic status

It is therefore concluded that academic status is unlikely to influence the uptake of training and/or attitudes towards future training.

Similarly the OM's previous occupation had little impact on the uptake of training and/or attitudes towards future training, the output from ANOVA showing that there were no significant differences at the $p < .05$ level. (Table 5.13 and Table 5.14).

Training taken

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.299	5	.060	.453	.811
Within Groups	45.370	344	.132		
Total	45.669	349			

Table 5.13. The results from tests used to determine significant associations between training uptake and previous occupation

future training

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.495	5	.299	1.009	.412
Within Groups	101.959	344	.296		
Total	103.454	349			

Table 5.14. The results from tests used to determine significant associations between attitudes towards future training and previous occupation

To determine whether training uptake could be linked to the firm's performance and success Chi Square and MANOVA were performed. The output from MANOVA (Lambda) indicated that there was a difference among the groups at the $<.05$ level ($p=.02$) (Table 5.15) even though preliminary analyses of the data (Chi-Square) suggested that there were no significant differences.

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
q13	Pillai's Trace	.022	3.935(b)	2.000	347.000	.020
	Wilks' Lambda	.978	3.935(b)	2.000	347.000	.020
	Hotelling's Trace	.023	3.935(b)	2.000	347.000	.020
	Roy's Largest Root	.023	3.935(b)	2.000	347.000	.020

Table 5.15. Test results for significant associations between movements in sales, perceptions of the firms success and training uptake

However 'Tests of Between Subject Effects' (using a Bonferonni adjusted alpha level of .025) showed that none of the dependent variables had reached statistical significance (Table 5.16).

Source	Dependent variable	Type III Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
q13	How successful is your business	.848	1	.848	2.375	.124
	Current rate of sales v last years sales	1.375	1	1.375	1.722	.190

Table 5.16. Significant associations between movements in sales levels, perceptions of the firm's success and the uptake of training

The uptake of training is therefore unlikely to affect the firm's performance and/or the OM's perceptions of its success.

5.5ii.Skill Prioritisation

Given that the research aims to establish which skills are perceived as being the most important to those who purchase established enterprises (Objective 2), it is necessary to determine which factors are likely to influence skill prioritisation. The skills that are perceived as being the most important to successful small business ownership and the way skills were rated for inclusion on OM training programmes are therefore of particular interest.

This section of the chapter also examines whether previous ownership of a business and/or the length of time the business has been owned influences OM's perception of their current skill levels. The results of these tests are important, as the findings it will help to identify the key areas for skill development. Moreover if it can be shown that skill levels tend to increase along with experience, this would suggest that experiential

learning is likely to play a significant role in the development of OM skills and competencies.

The output produced by MANOVA suggests that business type has a strong influence on the way skills are prioritised for successful small business ownership, the score produced by Wilk's Lambda totalling less than .05 ($p=.10$) (Table 5.17).

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
j1	Pillai's Trace	.178	2.027	16.000	332.000	.011
	Wilks' Lambda	.827	2.061(b)	16.000	330.000	.010
	Hotelling's Trace	.204	2.095	16.000	328.000	.008
	Roy's Largest Root	.173	3.583(c)	8.000	166.000	.001

Table 5.17. Results from tests used to determine significant associations between business type and the way skills are prioritized for successful small business ownership

However, further tests revealed that only one of the dependent variables, (managing the business generally), recorded a significant value of less than .006 (the Bonferroni

Source	Dependent variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
j1	Skills required (accounting)	1.003	2	.501	1.225	.296
	Skills required (cust relations)	.582	2	.291	.957	.386
	Skills required (rels with supls)	4.507	2	2.253	1.596	.206
	Skills required (know cust needs)	3.152	2	1.576	3.239	.042
	Skills required (recruit staff)	.241	2	.121	.147	.864
	Skills required (manage staff)	.615	2	.308	.564	.570
	Skills required (manage bus)	4.620	2	2.310	6.501	.002
	Skills required (make decisions)	4.801	2	2.040	5.358	.006

Table 5.18. Significant associations between the key skills required for successful business ownership and business type

adjustment) (Table 5.18). Although the difference between the mean scores totalled less than one scale point, it is nevertheless concluded that the way skills were rated for successful business ownership was influenced by business type.

By contrast the length of time the firm had been owned had no influence on skill prioritisation within this context, the output from MANOVA (Lambda) showing that there were no significant differences at the $p < .05$ level ($p = .246$) (Table 5.19).

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
duration	Pillai's Trace	.059	1.302(b)	8.000	166.000	.246
	Wilks' Lambda	.941	1.302(b)	8.000	166.000	.246
	Hotelling's Trace	.063	1.302(b)	8.000	166.000	.246
	Roy's Largest Root	.063	1.302(b)	8.000	166.000	.246

Table 5.19. Results from tests used to determine significant associations between the key skills required for successful business ownership and the length of time the business has been owned

Previous ownership of a small business also had little influence on the way skills were prioritized for business success, the output produced by MANOVA showing that there were no significant differences at the $p < .05$ level ($p = .093$) (Table 5.20)

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
q6	Pillai's Trace	.077	1.738(b)	8.000	166.000	.093
	Wilks' Lambda	.923	1.738(b)	8.000	166.000	.093
	Hotelling's Trace	.084	1.738(b)	8.000	166.000	.093
	Roy's Largest Root	.084	1.738(b)	8.000	166.000	.093

Table 5.20. Results for tests to determine significant associations between skill ratings for successful small business ownership and previous ownership of a business

With regards to the way skills were prioritized for inclusion on OM training programmes, the results produced by MANOVA showed that business type had no influence on skill ratings; the output from Pillai's Trace recording a sig. value greater than .05 ($p=.072$) (Table 5.21).

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
j1	Pillai's Trace	.284	1.451	28.000	246.000	.072
	Wilks' Lambda	.732	1.468(b)	28.000	244.000	.067
	Hotelling's Trace	.343	1.484	28.000	242.000	.061
	Roy's Largest Root	.259	2.275(c)	14.000	123.000	.008

Table 5.22. Results from tests to determine significant associations between skill ratings for inclusion on OM training programmes and business type

The output from MANOVA revealed that previous ownership of small business also had little influence on the way skills were rated for inclusion on OM training programmes, the output from Pillai's Trace recording a sig. value greater than .05. ($p=.749$) (Table 5.23).

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
q6	Pillai's Trace	.076	.722(b)	14.000	123.000	.749
	Wilks' Lambda	.924	.722(b)	14.000	123.000	.749
	Hotelling's Trace	.082	.722(b)	14.000	123.000	.749
	Roy's Largest Root	.082	.722(b)	14.000	123.000	.749

Table 5.23. Results from tests used to determine significant associations between skill ratings for inclusion on OM training programmes and previous ownership of a small business

By contrast tests performed to determine whether skill prioritization within this context was influenced by the length of time the business had been owned, showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the groups tested, the output from

MANOVA (Lambda) recording a sig. value that was less than .05 ($p=.012$) (Table 5.24).

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
a2	Pillai's Trace	.198	2.175(a)	14.000	123.000	.012
	Wilks' Lambda	.802	2.175(a)	14.000	123.000	.012
	Hotelling's Trace	.248	2.175(a)	14.000	123.000	.012
	Roy's Largest Root	.248	2.175(a)	14.000	123.000	.012

Table 5.24. Significant associations between the length of time the business has been owned and skill ratings for inclusion on OM training programmes

However when the results for the dependent variables were considered separately using a Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of .003, none reached statistical significance. It is therefore concluded that the length of time the business has been owned is unlikely to influence the way skills are prioritized for inclusion on OM training programmes.

5.5iii.OMs Perceptions of Their Skill Levels

Tests that were performed to determine whether OMs perceptions of their personal skill levels was influenced by previous ownership of a business showed that there were no statistically significant differences between the groups tested; the output from MANOVA (Pillai's Trace) recording a sig. value greater than .05 ($p=.396$) (Table 5.25).

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
q6	Pillai's Trace	.048	1.057(b)	8.000	166.000	.396
	Wilks' Lambda	.952	1.057(b)	8.000	166.000	.396
	Hotelling's Trace	.051	1.057(b)	8.000	166.000	.396
	Roy's Largest Root	.051	1.057(b)	8.000	166.000	.396

Table 5.25. Test results for significant associations between perceptions of skill levels and previous ownership of a small firm

MANOVA also showed that the length of time the firm had been owned had little impact on OM's perceptions of their skill levels; Pillai's trace recording a sig. value of .304 Table 5.26).

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
duration	Pillai's Trace	.054	1.196(b)	8.000	166.000	.304
	Wilks' Lambda	.946	1.196(b)	8.000	166.000	.304
	Hotelling's Trace	.058	1.196(b)	8.000	166.000	.304
	Roy's Largest Root	.058	1.196(b)	8.000	166.000	.304

Table 5.26. Test results for significant associations between perceptions of skill levels and the length of time the business has been owned

Although the above tests failed to establish a link between experience and skill levels the results provide an indication of the key areas for skill development. However it should be noted that small firm owners are often poor judges of their personal abilities, particularly if they are inexperienced. Given that 71% of the OM's surveyed had not owned a business before and 42% had owned the business for less than two years, the results generated by these tests must therefore be treated with caution.

5.6. Skill prioritisation: A Comparison of the Results Generated by the Two

Questionnaires

One of the advantages of using a two separate questionnaires is that it enabled the researcher to compare the way skills were prioritised for successful small business ownership (Questionnaire #1) with the way skills were prioritised for inclusion on OM training programmes (Questionnaire #2). Although it was possible to compare just six of the key skills listed, Table 5.27 shows that the main difference between the two sets results concerned dealing with suppliers where the scores differed by 28%. By contrast

the ratings for accounting/finance and general management are practically identical. Customer relations, managing staff and recruiting staff also produced similar figures, although the actual difference in scores is slightly larger. Notably the table shows that finance/accounting, general management, customer relations, managing staff, and recruiting staff are particularly important to those who purchase established enterprises; the figures having been obtained by combining the scores produced by the first two categories, ('extremely important' and 'important').

	The prioritisation of skills for OM training programmes	The prioritisation of skills for successful small business ownership	Difference in scores
Finance/Accounting	98%	96%	2%
General Management	96%	94%	2%
Customer Relations	84%	91%	7%
Managing Staff	78%	87%	9%
Recruiting Staff	71%	83%	12%
Dealing with suppliers	39%	67%	28%

Table 5.27. Comparing the prioritisation of skills for OM training programmes (Questionnaire 1) with the prioritisation of skills for OM training programmes (Questionnaire 2)

5.7. Summary

The findings presented in this chapter offer sufficient evidence to suggest that OM training should be available to those who purchase established enterprises. The support for proposition 1 (Particular support is required for those who take over/purchase established enterprises) is therefore very strong. However the support for Proposition 2 (The skill priorities of those who purchase established enterprises are influenced by business type) is mixed; the output from MANOVA showing that whilst business type had no influence on the way skills were prioritised for OM training programmes

(Questionnaire 2, $n=175$), it did influence the way skills were rated for successful small business ownership (Questionnaire 1, $n=175$). Support for Proposition 3, (The skill priorities of those who purchase small going-concerns are significantly influenced by the fact that the business was purchased as an established enterprise) could not be determined as this issue is too broad in scope to examine via a postal questionnaire. This topic is therefore explored during the OM interviews (Stage 2 of the research). With regards to Proposition 4 (The skill priorities of experienced OMs will differ from those who are relatively new to small firm ownership), the output from MANOVA showed that the length of time the business has been owned and/or previous ownership of a business had no influence on the way skills were prioritised for (1) successful business ownership and (2) inclusion on OM training programmes. The proposition is therefore rejected. Given that it could not be determined whether preferred methods of training are influenced by the fact that the business was purchased as an established enterprise (Proposition 5) this particular issue is also explored during the OM interviews (Phase 2 of the research).

The results generated by the survey also revealed a number of key areas that required further examination. For example whilst the questionnaire provided an indication of the most frequently used sources of advice, the reasons why OMs favoured a particular source could not be determined. Similarly it could not be established why particular skills were more highly prioritised than others and/or whether the ratings were linked to the fact that the business was purchased as a going-concern. Whilst the results from the questionnaire suggest that time constraints and limited financial resources often prohibit the take-up training, a large number of OMs indicated that there were 'other reasons' why training had not been taken. Further questioning was therefore required in order to identify these other factors. The inheritance of staff, secondary sources of

advice, the use of public sector support agencies, the delivery of specialist training, business planning (including budgeting), informal training, perceptions of success and the sources of learning that are the most beneficial to those who purchase established enterprises also needed to be examined as these issues are too broad in scope to examine via quantitative research methods.

The questions that form the basis of the follow-up interviews held with the OMs (Stage 2 of the research) are presented in a question matrix, which is located on page A201 of the appendices.

The results generated by the questionnaire also formed the basis of the accountants' interviews (Phase 2 of the research), which examine the difficulties facing purchasers of established enterprises; the skills required for successful small business ownership; the type of training/learning that is the most beneficial to small firm owners; whether those who purchase established enterprises would benefit from specialist support and training; the key differences between starting a new business and purchasing a going-concern; skill shortage and how this could be addressed. A question matrix pertaining to these interviews is also located in the appendices (page A227).

The results generated by the interviews (Stage 1 [Phase 2] and Stage 2 of the research) are presented in the following chapter. The first section therefore examines the findings of the Accountants interviews, whilst the second section discusses the outcome of the OM interviews.

CHAPTER 6

Phase 2 Results: The Accountants Interviews

6.1. Introduction

This chapter documents the findings of Phase 2 of the research, the accountants' interviews. The purpose of these interviews was to obtain a professional viewpoint on a number of key issues relating to small business owner-management namely, the problems facing small firms; the key differences between start-ups and firms that were purchased as established enterprises; methods of training; the use of public support networks; the skills required for successful small business ownership; skill shortage and how this might best be addressed and whether those who purchase established businesses are in need of particular support and training.

The final number of cases (accountants) totalled ten, this being the point where theoretical saturation had been reached (Eisenhardt, 1989) and there was very little left to learn (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Chenail, 1994).

All the interviews were conducted out of business hours and were held either at the interviewees' workplace or at a venue of their choice. All of the interviewees were informed from the outset that there were no 'right' or 'wrong' answers; the objective being to examine small business ownership from their particular point of view.

6.2. Interview Analysis

The interviews were recorded through written transcript only as nine of the ten people interviewed requested that a tape recorder should not be used. Although this could have caused problems in regards to time, the difficulties remained minimal as the researcher has a great deal of experience in longhand note taking. A significant number of direct quotations were recorded as these could be used to support many of the key findings. These citations also provided examples of how the interviewees were able to justify their answers.

Given that the analysis of qualitative data consists of data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles & Huberman, 1994) the first phase of the analysis was to streamline the amount of text contained within the original transcripts. Although this was not as large as the volume of text that is often generated by unstructured interviews and/or transcripts of taped interviews (Chenail, 2000), this process nevertheless enabled the researcher to sharpen and organize the data so that preliminary conclusions could be drawn and verified (Tesch, 1994; Chenail, 2000). Condensing the data in this way also ensured that all the relevant data was included (Chenail, 2000). The notes were therefore re-examined and rewritten (in longhand), particular attention being paid to data exemplars (quotes from the text) that could be used in the presentation of the findings to illustrate key points and/or areas of significance.

This process was followed by the construction of individual interviewee matrices, which were used to identify and code areas of similarity within the text (with different colour marker pens); a typical example being the points made by interviewees with regards to the

inappropriateness of OM training programmes. All of these matrices were placed on a large cork notice board, as this enabled the researcher to observe at-a-glance, blocks of text that contained significant similarities. From the patterns and commonalities that emerged it was possible to draw number of preliminary conclusions, which were recorded in list form for future reference, namely the presentation of the findings.

The findings are documented in the order that the questions were asked (i.e. as they appeared on the OM/Accountants' interview matrices) (page A227 of the appendices). A significant number of exemplars are also included as these add support to the findings and help provide a more complete picture of the social group being studied (Hopper, 1988; Chenail, 2000).

To validate the findings, comparisons were made with the results generated by the questionnaire (Phase 1 of the research), as this would provide indication of the plausibility and robustness of the conclusions drawn (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The results that emerged from these comparisons are documented in the final section of the chapter.

6.3. The Interview Results

6.3i. Introduction

The interviews that were conducted with the accountants took place in the interviewees working environment, where the atmosphere was relaxed and informal. The attitude adopted by interviewees was generally one of professional confidence coupled with

decisiveness. All were eager to share their experiences and demonstrated much enthusiasm when asked to expand on their initial responses.

Significantly the results reflected many of the findings that emerged from the OM Phase 1 of the study (the OM survey), demonstrating an element of rigour and reliability in the design and execution of the research.

6.4. The Problems Experienced by Small Firms

Having asked the accountants to provide information concerning the main problems facing small firms, the majority (eight) were of the opinion that red tape and bureaucracy are the worst offenders. Half also claimed that time shortage was likely to cause difficulties, although it was generally felt that business failure was primarily due to inexperience and/or poor management skills. Six of the interviewees further remarked that a poor knowledge of finance exacerbated these problems whilst two drew attention to the consequences of having little or no '*...common sense...*' When questioned as to whether these problems applied to all small firms (i.e. new businesses and firms that have changed owners), all ten interviewees said that they did but not always in the same context. For example all the accountants suggested that start-ups are likely to experience specific problems concerning the launch of the business, whereas those taking over established firms tend to experience difficulties when they first take-over. Eight of the interviewees were also of the opinion that those starting new enterprises have more freedom of choice. When asked to explain this concept, they suggested that these people are able to build the business gradually, whereas those taking over existing enterprises '*...have to maintain a pace that has been set by others...*' (No.4 p.2). Nine of the accountants also argued that people starting new businesses are able to choose their employees personally whereas those who take over established enterprises are often '*...stuck with...*' people they have inherited. More than

'half of the interviewees drew attention to the fact that new businesses often reflect the nature of their owners, (e.g. the culture of the firm and the methods of working) whereas those who take over established businesses have to operate, at least initially *'... in an environment that has been created and/or personalised by somebody else...'* (No.2, p.1)

The following comment tends to underscore this point.

'The feeling of ownership in the true sense can... elude those taking over existing firms as they are essentially running somebody else's business. Its like buying a house... it's not until you start to personalise things that you get true sense of belonging and ownership...' (No.2, p.2)

However the majority of interviewees claimed that age (i.e. maturity) often acts as a key determinant to the way such problems are approached. When asked to expand on this, they suggested that young people in particular often want *'everything to happen yesterday'* (No.4, p.1) whereas in reality they are *'... like fish out of water...'* (No.3, p.2)

Older people, by contrast have more life experience, which they are able to apply to a wide range of situations even though the learning events in question may be totally unrelated to small business ownership. Although the accountants acknowledged that small firm owners face a number of difficulties nine of the interviewees were nevertheless of the opinion that these problems are often intensified by a lack of the appropriate skills and/or inexperience.

6.5. Comparing the Differences Between Start-ups and Firms That are Purchased as Going-Concerns

Exploring what, if anything segregates business purchasers from those who decide to launch new enterprises, the majority of interviewees were able to cite several major differences between the two. Firstly there was the question of age, seven stating that those who purchase going concerns tend to be significantly older than those starting new businesses. The interviewees also claimed that purchasers of established enterprises are often more pragmatic than those involved with start-ups. This was again attributed to age, as older people are often more realistic. By contrast those starting new enterprises '*... often to want to run before they can walk ...*' (No.4, p.1)

Other differences that could be linked to ownership context included the reasons people become self-employed. For example eight interviewees claimed that those starting new businesses are often influenced by different external factors than those who purchase established enterprises. Six interviewees then provided the example of how advisors at the Jobcentre often encourage long-term claimants to work for themselves. Eight of the accountants also remarked that those with a criminal record might have no choice but to become self-employed. Commenting on the amount of support that is available to those wishing to take this particular route the interviewees suggested that established firms (including those that had changed owners) rarely had access to the same type of facilities. Reference was then made to the numerous government incentives that are aimed towards the creation of new enterprises whereas those taking over established businesses are rarely offered this form of assistance. When asked to speculate on why there is so little support available to those who purchase going-concerns eight interviewees suggested that support

providers probably believe that established firms are likely to experience fewer problems than start-ups.

'...After all they [going concerns] have already established themselves...the fact that these firms have been trading for a significant amount of time suggests they are successful...'

(No.4, p.17)

'I think the powers that be feel that those who are in a position to purchase a business have no need for assistance. OK so they may be able to raise substantial amounts of capital but that doesn't mean they aren't going to need help...' (No.6, p.18)

'Established businesses can experience all types of difficulties. Just because they are in profit this doesn't mean they don't have problems. This type of owner often asks for advice ...' (No.1, p.18)

'... Established firms are particularly affected by changes that are likely to have an impact on their trade...like new road layouts or the closure of a large local employer...' (No.10, p.17)

All of the interviewees were therefore in favour of introducing new schemes that would support and assist those who purchaser/take over established enterprises.

6.6. The Skills Required for Successful Small Business Ownership

Looking at the skills that are most important to successful small business ownership, the majority of interviewees (seven) were of the opinion that the ability to manage the business and effective people skills were the key determinants.

'If people have the capacity to build good customer relations they really have very little to worry about. Small businesses have the advantage of being able to provide a personal service ...and this can pay dividends. The public are tired of being effectively processed by these large department stores...' (No.4, p.6)

A basic knowledge of finance was also considered important, all ten interviewees remarking on the need for competence in this area. When they were asked whether these views had been influenced by their occupation, they suggested that it was the amount of time spent *'...trying to reduce the amount of financial mess some clients had got themselves' into...'* (No.4, p.5) that highlighted this particular skill gap. Attention was also drawn to the way small firms are renowned for their inability to manage finance. The following comments tend to highlight this particular point.

'Small business owners often perceive profit as disposable income to spend how they wish. When there is a significant upturn in trade they can get really carried away... (No.6, p.5)

'It may be hard to believe but there are those who think they can throw all the paper-work into a carrier bag... and bring it ... for me to sort out. This is clearly very time – consuming... I now make a point of showing clients how they can manage their paperwork'. (No.4, p.5)

'Some people really haven't got a clue. When they first come and see me I try and show them the basic things they need to do... Most of them hate dealing with paperwork... but once they have developed a system they don't mind it so much...' (No.7, p.5)

With regards to marketing, eight interviewees were of the opinion that there was a need for skills in this area, as small businesses need to retain a competitive edge. However the remaining two interviewees believed that a good reputation was the key to generating new business. Both nevertheless conceded that effective marketing skills would probably be required for the effective launch of new products/services. All ten interviewees argued that the ability to perceive customer needs was essential. Referring again to the importance of building good customer relations, they suggested that it is the feedback provided by customers that enable small firms to provide goods and services for which there is a genuine need.

'One client who owns a bakery is constantly asking customers what they think ... The fact that he acts on their advice does wonders for trade...He makes these people feel they are an integral part of the business rather than just people who buy what they want and leave'. (No.8, p.6)

Given the views expressed previously in regards to the importance of being able to exercise financial control, it was significant to find that just seven interviewees were of the opinion that business planning is essential. When the remaining five were asked why this was not considered a major priority they suggested that the business world changes so quickly that *'...what applies today is unlikely to apply tomorrow...'* (No.6, p.5). Any plans

that are made should therefore '*...focus on the short term... with plenty of allowance for contingency...*' (No.6, p.5). However these particular interviewees were of the opinion that those starting new businesses need to develop short, medium and long-term plans, as this creates a framework for the business. Significantly all of the accountants suggested that where OM's intend to make significant changes, a plan of action may be required.

6.7. Common Skill Gaps and Areas of Incompetence

Looking to identify common skill gaps and areas of incompetence the interviewees were able to pinpoint very precisely where gaps are likely to occur. One of the main areas that gave cause for concern was the inability to manage the business generally, although it was felt this was often due to poor financial control. The following remarks illustrate the damaging effects of poor financial control and how the stubbornness of many small business owners often compounds this problem

'Some people just cannot hold the business together... they are what I call messy managers... They are determined to do absolutely everything their own way regardless...'
(No.10, p.7)

'The main thing with these people is that they don't learn from their mistakes...probably because they think the problem lies elsewhere... They often don't want to ask for help either...they don't like putting themselves in a position where someone is telling them what to do...' (No.2, p.8)

Eight of the interviewees also suggested that small firm owners are '*...are not particularly good at keeping to business plans...*' (No.8, p.8). Although they claimed that OM's are often keen to formulate strategies that will help control cashflow, these plans are rarely carried through. As a result small firm owners often experience problems regarding over expenditure and/or a lack of direction.

'Some small firm owners don't seem to be able to think laterally... they prefer to take each day as it comes. This is fine but you still need some sort of framework...' (No.3, p.8)

'It's all very well creating the perfect business plan... but it won't work unless you keep to it...' (No.2, p.8)

'It's a waste of time drawing up a business plan if you are not going to stick to it...' (No.8, p.7)

By contrast none of the interviewees felt that small firm owners lacked the ability to effectively market their goods. Eight of the interviewees further remarked that their clients (OMs) would often ask for advice in regards to marketing strategies and/or how best to promote new products and/or services. None of the accountants could recall an instance where clients had wasted time and/or money on strategies that had failed.

Nine of the interviewees were of the opinion that the majority of small business owners had excellent people skills. This applied to customers and employees. None could recall any major problems in regards to staff that had been inherited although it was not unknown

for OM's to encounter minor difficulties during the early stages of take-over. Five of the accountants had nevertheless been asked for advice in regards to the legalities of dismissing unsuitable staff. By contrast recruiting staff often caused a number of problems. The majority of interviewees claimed that this is because many OM's are inexperienced in this area and *'... don't really know what to look for...'* (No.5, p.8) As a result the people they employ are often unsuitable.

'This is always difficult to get right...you can't really call the OM's incompetent, it's just poor judgement...' (No.6, p.8)

'Most small business owners like to employ people they will enjoy working with. Experienced OM's will almost always choose somebody they feel good about and then train them up...' (No.5, p.8)

Examining how skill shortage might best be addressed and/or how OM's could improve their skill levels, the majority of interviewees were of the opinion that those concerned should seek advice and/or depending on the skill in question, consider training. However eight of the accountants believed that obtaining advice would offer a more practical solution, as most of the OM's they came into contact with were too involved with the business to find the time to train. All of the interviewees claimed that small firm owners benefit from activities that bring them into contact with other OM's', as they can exchange ideas and information. Based on the feedback received from clients it was felt that this type of informal network would also provide OM's with the opportunity to discuss any problems they have with those who are more experienced. When asked to provide examples, trade

associations and seminars were cited as the being the most beneficial, although the majority of interviewees suggested that any activity that encourages this type of interaction is likely to be beneficial.

'Talking to other people who have experienced the same sort of problems can be a great help... They are also more credible than your average classroom Johnnie because they are speaking from experience ... not from a textbook...' (No.6, p.10)

6.8. Methods of Training

Looking at the type of training programme that was considered the most appropriate, the majority of interviewees (eight) were of the opinion that seminars are probably one of the most effective methods of skill development as it enables OM's to learn a great deal relatively quickly. Seven of the accountants further remarked that seminars also enable OM's to interact with each other. Five of the interviewees suggested that day-release courses could be useful, as they tend to focus on the gradual building of a workable knowledge base. However having considered the practicalities of this approach four admitted that OM's might find it difficult to incorporate this form of training into a busy work schedule. Six interviewees also remarked on the situation regarding sole traders, who find it particularly difficult to find the time to train, as they are rarely in a position to delegate work. In regards to those who purchase established enterprises the majority of interviewees (nine) were therefore in favour of training that took place prior to the business being taken over, as this would help to avoid the problem of time shortage. Eight of the interviewees further remarked that OM training which is scheduled to take place at this particular time is also likely to attract prospective small firm owners who would be able to gain insight into the basic elements of small business management before they actually

committed themselves. Significantly the majority of interviewees were of the opinion that training taken at this time would have a greater impact, as course participants are less likely to be preoccupied with thoughts concerning the business.

'...OMs basically dislike being away from the heart of things. As their mind is likely to be elsewhere ... they will probably absorb very little ...' (No.1. p.10)

Although eight of the accountants drew attention to the benefits that can be afforded by distance learning (e.g. flexibility) only two were in favour of this form of training. When questioned further they argued that this could only be effective if the individual concerned was prepared to set aside time solely for this purpose. Given that small firm owners are continually plagued by time constraints, the interviewees concluded that this form of training is likely to suit very few OMs.

Despite the general opinion that, formal training could be beneficial, nine of the interviewees nevertheless claimed that the majority of formal training programmes are extremely narrow in scope. Eight also suggested that OMs often find it difficult to find suitable training. The interviewee's comment below provides an example of how inappropriate OM training can be.

'...A couple of my clients who have started new businesses attended courses that were really quite ridiculous ... The focus was almost entirely on the hunger for business... rather than the skills required to keep a small business afloat. One person even found

himself having to jump up and down on chairs...These things should be kept simple and to the point'. No.8, p.10)

When asked which method of skill development is the most effective, all ten of the accountants claimed that the majority of OM's skills and competences are developed through practical experience, namely learning-by-doing. Expanding on their answers the interviewees went on to describe how this particular form of learning enables OM's to develop skills that are relevant to that particular business environment. The following remarks tend to underscore this point.

'...Being able to manage a newsagents doesn't necessarily mean you can manage a guesthouse. Of course there are some skills that all small business owners need ...but most are unique to that particular business...' (No.4, p.11)

'You cannot really learn the practicalities of running a business from reading a textbook or attending lectures...If a hairdresser attends a conference about owning and managing a hairdressing business... he or she will undoubtedly learn a great deal about owning and managing a hairdressers...but it won't teach them how to manage their hairdressing business...' (No.3, p.12)

Acknowledging that most people have preferred methods of learning and that formal training strategies tend to be unpopular amongst the small business fraternity, the interviewees (ten) argued that the method of learning is really unimportant *'...so long as the individual is able to gain something from it...' (No.10, p.12)*. Eight of the accountants

further remarked that learning is more effective when people are able to use the sources they prefer and '*...get the most from...*' (No.8, p.12).

6.9. Support Provision

When the interviewees were asked to express an opinion as to whether there should be support for those who purchase established enterprises, all ten stated that these facilities should be available. Exploring the reasons for their answers, attention was drawn to a number of key areas where particular support is required. For example seven accountants suggested that when they initially take over, purchasers of going-concerns often find it difficult to establish working relationships with staff they have inherited. They were therefore of the opinion that support in this particular area would help OM's to prepare for such eventualities and/or find ways of resolving these difficulties. Four of the interviewees also claimed that people who purchase going-concerns occasionally feel the business '*...doesn't quite belong to them...*' (No.5, p. 16) particularly when they are working with people, namely staff '*... who know a damned sight more... than they do ...*' (No.7, p.16). Given that OM's who find themselves in this situation are often reluctant to exercise authority, assistance may be required to help alleviate the problem.

However the area that tends to give purchasers of established businesses the most cause for concern is being able to maintain existing levels of trade. Nine of the interviewees remarked that this often causes new owners a great deal of worry, as they fear the goodwill of the business will be jeopardised if levels of performance cannot be sustained. Six of the accountants further remarked that OM's also fear that they will lose the customers who were particularly attached to the previous owner. It was therefore argued that the

appropriate support would enable OM's to cope more effectively with this situation and help them to find ways of retaining existing customers.

Although the accountants were aware that support is available, their knowledge of public sector support networks was limited; Business Link and TECs' being the only agencies to receive recognition. Further questioning revealed that interviewees' lack of knowledge in this area was mainly due to the fact that their clients never referred to this particular source of advice. However all of the accountants were aware that start-up programmes were available to the long-term unemployed through the jobcentre.

Further discussions revealed that the majority of interviewees believed that organisations such as Business Link needed to significantly raise their profile. Eight then went on to suggest that these organisations should work more closely with banks, colleges, accountants and other institutions that are involved with small firms. These particular interviewees then went on to explain how this would enable OM's to gain access to wide range of support providers. Five of the interviewees also felt that media advertising could be more effective as it currently did very little to stimulate the interest of potential users.

6.10. The Role of Accountants as Personal Business Advisors

When questioned about the type of advice they are most frequently asked to provide, all of the interviewees claimed that they tend to be consulted on a wide range of issues, much of which is totally unrelated to finance. However if clients required specialist assistance (legal issues and raising capital being a typical example) the accountants would suggest that they consult the appropriate person. Acknowledging that most of the high street banks have

specialist advisors that deal exclusively with small firms, eight of the accountants suggested that the main reason for providing this facility was to ensure that the businesses to which they had lent money remained solvent. The remarks below reflect this opinion although it is also acknowledged that the support offered by banks can be beneficial.

'...From what I have heard these in-house advisors are very matter-of-fact... Basically they want to know they are going to get their money back and so everything is geared towards this... I am not saying they are not helpful...its just that they have a very specific agenda...' (No.4, p.16)

All of the interviewees were of the opinion that they were probably amongst the best placed to offer advice to small business owners as they had a great deal of experience in dealing with this type of firm. Eight also drew attention to the fact that accountants' who frequently work with small business owners tend to develop a very personal relationship with their clients, which other advisers, namely PBA's and bank managers are rarely able to do. The statement below provides an example of why the relationship between small firm owners and their accountants is particularly strong.

'When you have saved a client from the Inland Revenue and helped them sift through a mountain of paperwork, they tend have absolute faith in your judgement. ...It is this that gives them the confidence to ask for advice on other matters' (No.8, p.16)

6.11. Ownership Context and Success

When the interviewees were asked to consider whether start-ups are likely to be more successful than businesses that have been purchased as going concerns, the majority (eight) were of the opinion that established firms that had changed owners were likely to fare better than new ventures. When asked to explain why, they suggested that this is because purchasers of established enterprises tend to be older than those embarking on start-ups. Their outlook is therefore more realistic. Seven of the interviewees' also remarked that mature business owners are often able to manage people more effectively than younger OM's as they come from an era '*...when service meant service...*' (No.2, p.23). However six of the accountants admitted that they had witnessed several incidents where mature people who had purchased thriving businesses clearly had '*...more money than sense...*' (No.3, p.24).

From the eight interviewees who claimed that those who purchase established enterprises are likely to be more successful than start-ups, seven were of the opinion that the owners of these firms would probably fare very differently if they were trying to launch a new business.

Focusing on established firms generally, eight of the interviewees suggested that founder member owned firms were only marginally more successful than those that had changed owners. When asked to explain why, it was suggested that whilst founder member owned businesses have established themselves firmly in the market, they are often reluctant to '*...move with the times...*' By contrast, those who purchase going-concerns tend to be opportunists who are keen to move the firm forward.

6.12. Summary

The results of the accountants' interviews show that those who purchase established businesses have very different needs for those embarking on new ventures. Although there are a number of problems that are shared by all small businesses, there are others, which are directly related to ownership within this context. Whilst the majority of the accountants were of the opinion that skill development is best approached via informal methods, they were nevertheless able to identify a number of key areas where support is needed.

6.13. Comparing Quantitative and Qualitative Results

Having compared the findings of the OM survey with the results generated by the accountants' interviews it was possible to identify a number similarities ranging from shared viewpoints to the areas that often give cause for concern. Similarly the comments made by the accountants often underscored the information provided by the OMs even though there was a significant difference in perspectives.

With regards to the skills necessary for successful small business ownership, the ability to manage the business generally, the ability to build good customer relations and the ability to manage the financial aspects of the business were considered particularly important in both cases. However whilst the OMs were confident in their ability to manage the business and its finances, a number of the accountants' believed that there were often skill shortages in these areas.

Both data sets revealed that seminars and evening classes were the most appropriate method of skill development/training. The general consensus amongst OMs and the

accountants was that specialised training programmes should be readily available for those who purchase established enterprises. With regards to the most appropriate style of delivery, evening classes were the most popular choice, although the majority of the accountants were of the opinion that this type of training should adopt a less formal approach. Several accountants also drew attention to the advantages that could be afforded by undergoing OM training prior to business purchase/start-up as this avoids many of constraints associated with small business ownership, namely time shortage. These results are comparable to the findings generated by the OM survey which suggested that most of the training that had been taken occurred prior to the take-over of the business and where time shortage was cited as the main reason for the non take-up of training.

The results produced by the survey which indicated that accountants are the most likely people to be consulted for business advice was confirmed by the comments made by the interviewees, who claimed that they are frequently required to provide business advice on matters that are totally unrelated to finance.

6.14. The Need for Additional Research

Although the accountants' interviews provided a great deal of valuable data, additional information was nevertheless required in order to fulfil the research objectives. For example the findings generated by the questionnaire and the accountants interviews did not provide information regarding (1) informal training practices; (2) the OMs approach to business planning/budgeting, (3) OMs perceptions of success and (4) the criteria used for measuring the success of the business. It was also necessary to determine why the OMs provided the answers they did and whether for example skill prioritisation (Proposition 3),

and preferred methods of training (Proposition 5) were linked to the fact that the business was purchased as a going-concern.

It was therefore decided that a cross-section of the OMs who participated in the survey should be interviewed, as this would provide the information required.

The following chapter documents the details of the OM interviews (Phase 3 of the research) and compares the findings with the results generated by the accountants' interviews (Phase 2 of the research).

CHAPTER 7

Phase 3 Results: The Follow-up (OM) Interviews

7.1. Introduction

Although the OM survey (Phase 1 of the research) and the accountants interviews (Phase 2 of the research) produced a significant amount of valuable data, more information was required if the research objectives (p.139) were to be fulfilled.

For example neither the survey (Phase 1 of the research) nor the accountants interviews (Phase 2 of the research) was able to determine whether the fact that the business had been purchased as an established enterprise influenced (1) skill prioritisation (Proposition 3) and (2) preferred methods of training (Proposition 5). Further research was also required to establish (1) why the OMs prioritised skills in a particular way and (2) why accountants/banks managers are the most frequently used source of advice. Given also that a significant number of the OMs who had participated in the survey claimed that there were 'other reasons' (unspecified) why training had not been taken, it was therefore necessary to determine what these reasons were. Finally there were number of issues that were too broad in scope to include on a postal survey, and whilst every effort was made to obtain the information via the accountants, it was not possible to gather data pertaining to the uptake of informal training activities; business planning and budgeting; perceptions of business success and other sources of advice that those who purchase established enterprises are likely to use. The OMs interviews (Phase 3 of the research) were therefore designed to gain insight into these particular issues. A question matrix relating to this phase of the research is located on page A201 of the appendices.

7.2. Interview Analysis

The final number of cases (OMs) in this instance was twelve as the proposed number (ten) was insufficient to obtain all the information required, namely data concerning perceptions of success and the benefits afforded by formal training. However given that theoretical saturation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Eisenhardt, 1989) had been reached after twelve OMs had been interviewed no more cases were added.

All the 'OM interviews were conducted out of business hours and at the interviewees' workplace. The interviewees were informed from the outset that there were no 'right' or 'wrong' answers; the objective being to examine small business ownership from their particular point of view.

Given that there was a significant amount of time between the completing of the questionnaire and the OM interviews it needed to be determined whether attitudes and opinions had altered during this time. For example the OMs viewpoints concerning skill prioritisation, preferred methods of training and perceptions of the need for specialist support/training could have changed significantly. However a brief review of the questionnaire revealed that none of the OMs had changes their opinion/attitude regarding the issues detailed on the question matrix (p.A201).

As with the accountants' interviews, these interviews were also recorded via written transcript as eight of the twelve people interviewed requested that a tape recorder should not be used. To support the findings and provide examples of how the OMs were able to justify their answers, a significant number of direct quotations were also recorded.

The analytical process comprised data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The first phase of the analysis therefore involved streamlining the amount of text contained within the original notes¹. Although the amount of text generated was not particularly large this process nevertheless enabled the researcher to organize the data so that preliminary conclusions could be drawn and verified (Tesch, 1994; Chenail, 2000). The notes were therefore re-examined and rewritten (in longhand), particular attention being paid to data exemplars (quotes from the text) that could be used in the presentation of the findings to illustrate key points and/or areas of significance (Hopper, 1988; Chenail, 2000).

This process was followed by the construction of individual interviewee matrices, which were used to identify and code areas of similarity within the text; a typical example being the points made by interviewees with regards to the benefits that can be afforded by working alongside the present owners. All of these matrices were placed on a large cork notice board, which enabled the researcher to observe blocks of text that contained significant similarities. From the patterns and commonalities that emerged it was possible to draw number of preliminary conclusions, which were recorded in list form for future reference, namely the presentation of the findings.

The findings are documented in the order that the questions were asked (i.e. as they appeared on the interview matrix) (page A201).

To validate the findings, comparisons were made with the results generated by the questionnaire (Phase 1 of the research) and the interviews conducted with the accountants'

¹A typed example of the original notes taken during the interview is located on page A216 of the appendices

(Phase 2 of the research), as this would provide an indication of the plausibility and robustness of the conclusions drawn (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The results that emerged from these comparisons are documented towards the end of the chapter.

7.3 The Research Findings

7.3.i. The Purchase of the Business

Looking to determine why the OMs had purchased an established business as opposed to launching a new venture the majority (ten) of the interviewees claimed that start-ups carried a too much risk even though purchasing an established enterprise often required larger amounts of capital. When asked to expand on their answers the majority of the OMs referred to the debts that could be incurred if the business failed to ‘... *take off*...’ (No.5, p.1)¹. The fact that established enterprises have proved that they can generate income, suggests that this is likely to be safer than attempting to launch a new venture. The two interviewees who had experience of starting a new business argued this point emphatically, although they acknowledged that established firms could also collapse and fail. Several of the OMs were also of the opinion that they were too old to start a business from scratch.

‘It would be too risky at our age to try and start a business ... that’s more for younger people who can start again if it all goes wrong...With a new business ...you have to find out where you stand, what you can and can’t do ... and then try and set it all up...’ (No. 11, p.1)

Four of the interviewees suggested that if they were younger they might be willing to start

¹This refers to the interviewee number and the page where the quotation appears on the original notes.

a new business, but the majority of OM's were generally unsure. Significantly the two interviewees that were under thirty-five were also of the opinion that purchasing a going-concern was preferable to launching a new venture, their argument being that these businesses are already established. However both conceded that starting a business from scratch was very exciting. All of the interviewees remarked that established businesses often provide a great deal of scope for improvement.

When asked what attracted them to the business they currently owned, the main factors were business type (which was often influenced by prior knowledge/experience of that particular industry) the position/location of the business and the firm's potential. All of the OM's claimed that they had had a clear idea of the type of business they wished to purchase. From the eight who had previous experience of the industry, seven suggested that this is what gave them the confidence to become self-employed. Although the potential of the firm was clearly important, none of the OM's expressed a desire to grow and/or expand the business. Their main objective was therefore to improve the business generally and/or introduce new products and services. The following statement provides an example of the type of changes the OM's were likely to make.

'...When we saw this little café we just knew it could be a goldmine...it just needed a makeover... nothing too drastic...so we painted the walls...bought a few new pictures and changed the tablecloths. It may not sound like much but you wouldn't believe the difference...' (No.2, p.1)

The OMs who had purchased retail outlets, guesthouses and cafes (ten interviewees) claimed that the position of the business was particularly important as it needed be situated in a location that would to encourage passing trade.

However the two interviewees that had purchased other types of business namely a skip hire business and a window cleaning round were mainly concerned with improving the quality of their services in order to keep ahead of competitors.

7.3.ii. Inheriting Employees

Out of the twelve OMs interviewed ten employed staff. Eight of these were working with employees they had inherited.

A significant number of those who had inherited staff (five) had experienced difficulties in this area, most of which resulted from an underlying resentment (at the departure of the previous owners) and the feelings of uncertainty this provoked. However in all but one instance these difficulties had been resolved fairly rapidly. Significantly where the interviewees had worked alongside the present owners prior to take-over (four) these problems lasted no longer than a few days. The difficulties that can arise in regards to inheriting staff are reflected in the following statements.

'...When we were first introduced the tension was awful... you could cut the atmosphere with a knife...but after we'd been working together for a couple of days everything was fine...they helped us a lot too...' (No.10, p.3)

'The previous owners had been there twelve years ... that's a long time...of course the staff are going to be wary...but once they knew we valued their experience and weren't going to make any drastic changes...everything was fine...' (No.5, p.3)

For those who had not worked alongside the present owners the problems concerning staff they had inherited often lasted much longer where all but one of the interviewees had been compelled to seek professional advice. The individual who had not taken this course of action decided instead to dismiss these members of staff and replace them with new people. His comments (below) illustrate the seriousness of this particular situation.

'We just couldn't work with them at all. Nothing we said or did made the slightest bit of difference... I think they hated us from the start...and they absolutely loathed the changes we made... You can't run a business under those conditions...' (No.11, p.4)

7.3.iii. Skill Prioritisation

The most highly prioritised skills amongst the OMs interviewed were having the ability to build effective customer relations; being able to manage staff; having the ability to manage the financial aspects of the business and being able to manage the business generally. When asked why these skills had been rated so highly the majority of interviewees suggested that they were the mainstay of effective small business management. However the order in which these skills were prioritised was significantly influenced by business type and ownership context.

For example those operating in retail services and tourism suggested that customer relations were particularly important, as these types of business are people oriented.

Although a significant number of the OMs were involved with businesses that sold unique and/or unusual products it was nevertheless argued that the success of the business depended mainly on the ability to build good customer relations. The following remarks further illustrate the importance of this particular attribute

'If you have no customers, you have no business, it is as simple as that...' (No.2, p.6)

'My customers are almost like friends... I know a lot of them personally... their likes and dislikes... Small businesses depend on this... it's what makes us so much better than the chain stores ... I think people have had enough of being "processed" at checkouts...'
(No.7, p.5)

All the interviewees suggested that having the ability to manage the business generally was vital if the business was to be successful (managing the business being defined as having the ability to hold the business together). The following comments reflect the importance of being able to manage the business as whole

'You don't need to be highly skilled but you do need to know what you are doing... In my job the only real skills you need is knowing how to clean windows and being able to talk to people... Having said that ...I'd soon be in trouble if I didn't know how to do the books...'
(No.3, p.6)

'You can't build it all up gradually like you can with a new business...you've got to know what your doing straight off...if you mess up you'll lose business ... and all the goodwill...' (No.4, p.5)

It should be noted that the goodwill '*...is the sum paid to the vendor at the time of purchase of an ongoing business in recompense for the trade built up in previous years*' (Fuller, 1987).

The ability to manage staff was particularly important amongst those who had inherited employees. All of the interviewees to whom this applied emphasised this particular point. They also claimed that there is very little specialist help available to those who experience such difficulties. The importance of being able to manage staff is illustrated in the following statements

'There is a real knack to dealing with existing employees...I think it was probably easier for us because we worked with the owners for a while before we actually took over...'
(No.1, p.6)

'If you have problems with existing employees your life will be a misery...you really have know how to handle these people if you are going to get them on board...' (No.6, p.6)

The difficulties that could arise from inheriting staff prompted eight of the interviewees to comment on the advantage of being able to select their own staff. Although the majority of those interviewed would have preferred to select their own working team, most of the comments pertaining to this issue came from OM's who had not worked alongside the present owners prior to taking over the business.

All of the interviewees were adamant that a business was likely to experience serious problems if the owner was unable to manage the firm's finances.

The skills that the interviewees rated as being the least important were health and safety issues, dealing with suppliers, marketing and information technology. Significantly the ability to manage staff was considered unimportant by just one interviewee, who was a sole trader. However the OM concerned believed that this particular skill is essential to those who employ staff. The majority of interviewees believed that marketing skills are more likely to be required by those who are starting new businesses. They were nevertheless of the opinion that this particular skill is important if new products/services are to be launched successfully. Significantly five of the interviewees remarked that marketing skills tend to be more important amongst large organisations, as these firms are continually looking for ways to keep ahead of their market rivals.

The majority of those that felt that health and safety issues were not a key determinant of effective small business management suggested that those who take over established firms have the advantage of being able to follow existing policies and procedures. The OMs who owned cafes and guesthouses also shared this opinion even though they were required to obtain a certificate in food hygiene. However all of the interviewees remarked that there was often a great deal to remember. The following remarks show that whilst purchasers of established enterprises are rarely concerned about Health and Safety issues they are nevertheless aware that this is an important element of small business ownership.

' We went through it all with the owners...although we both needed to get our certificates in food hygiene... The hardest part is keeping up with new rules and regulations... ' (No.2, p.6)

'It's pretty straightforward really ...I suppose it depends what business you're in...Starting your own business must be a nightmare... so much to think about and organise...' (No.9, p.6)

'We're used to this type of thing...we've owned a business before. You've got to keep on the ball though.... there's always something new coming out ...' (No. 6, p.6)

The two interviewees who felt that the ability to deal effectively with suppliers was not important to successful small business management suggested that these people were unlikely to affect the success of the business, as they are not involved directly. It was further implied that if the goods/services provided by suppliers were unsatisfactory alternatives could be found. However the majority of interviewees acknowledged that much could be gained from developing good working relationships with these people.

Being able to exploit the advantages of Information technology was considered a low priority for two reasons. Firstly it was argued that as most people are able to use a computer, this could no longer be regarded as a specialist skill. It was also suggested that having the ability to use the Internet would not help to build effective customer relations, which they argued could only be achieved through personal contact.

'Of course the Internet is helpful... if you want to send information quickly ... but it can't help you run the business and it can't help you build good relationships with your customers...' (No.11, p.6)

7.3.iv. Planning

Out of the twelve OMs interviewed only six admitted to using formal business plans. From those remaining five suggested that plans were made but not in form of a written agenda.

With regards to budgeting, four of the interviewees were of the opinion that the information provided on bank statements makes it easy to keep track of finances. When asked to expand on their answers they described the way each bank statement is itemised, thus making it possible to monitor the account continually. Three of the interviewees also suggested that as direct debits are paid at specific times, for example each month, people know precisely when particular payments are due.

'These monthly statements show you exactly what's going on... you can see at a glance what you've got to work with... whether you need to be paying more money in ... or if you need to increase your overdraft...' (No.3, p.7)

The statements below further illustrate the way the OMs planned. Although their methods are evidently unstructured, the strategies they employ nevertheless provide a strong indication that these people recognise the importance of forward thinking

'It's hard to make long-term concrete plans as everything changes all the time...but we still sit down regularly and go through everything...' (No.5, p.8)

'Just because we don't have everything written down it doesn't mean we aren't organised' (No.7, p.7)

Six of the interviewees remarked that they frequently asked their accountant and/or bank adviser to help with general business planning and budgeting. These consultations were therefore used to discuss ways of preparing for the future and/or how the current financial situation might be improved.

The four who favoured a more formal structured approach to business planning and budgeting felt that this was the only way they could effectively keep control of the business. However three admitted that they always received help, as they often found it difficult to keep precise records. Whilst two engaged the help of their accountant the other preferred to ask a family member who also owned a small business.

7.3.v. The Most frequently Used Source of Advice

The most frequently used sources of advice amongst the twelve OM's interviewed were accountants (seven) bank managers (three) solicitors (one) and relatives (one).

When asked why they tended to use one particular source of advice more frequently than others, it was suggested that these people were the most trustworthy, reliable and knowledgeable. More than half of those who preferred to consult their accountant remarked that although he/she was clearly an expert on the intricacies of small business management they were never condescending. The following comments typify the reasons why accountants are one of the most frequently used sources of external advice.

'My accountant really knows what he's doing.... an expert... I can ask him anything ...'

(No.9, p.9)

'When we first met her [their accountant] we knew very little...just the basics really.... she was really helpful...completely opposite to the chap at the bank... I felt like the class dunce when I was talking to him....' (No.1, p.9)

The interviewees who were most likely to consult their bank (three) suggested that this was because their problems usually concerned finance. In all three cases the consultant was an advisor who dealt only with small firms.

'This guy at the bank helps me keep the money situation under control...I've never been brilliant at figures so I need someone I can rely on...' (No.8, p.10)

The interviewees who preferred to consult their solicitor and/or relatives did so because these people had a great deal of experience in dealing with small firms. In this instance the relatives in question also owned a small business. The following remarks illustrate the type of relationship OMs are likely to develop with those they consult most frequently.

'It's all about trust and confidence...my solicitor is a family friend...I've known him for years...I can ask him practically anything...' (No.10, p.9)

' My cousin has been in business for the past twenty-seven years... when we first bought the business we used to ring them up at all times of the day and night...' (No.1, p.10)

7.3.vi. Other Sources of Advice

Although the interviewees had one particular source of advice that they used frequently, when specialist assistance was required they occasionally used other sources. For example

if information was required in regards to health and safety issues the appropriate authority would be consulted. Similarly if they needed advice regarding interior design they would engage the services of an expert in this field.

'Obviously if you need to know something specific you'll ask the appropriate person...'
(No.10, p.11)

However when the interviewees were contemplating changes to the business and/or they wished to introduce new products and services they would often obtains opinions from friends and relatives before consulting their accountant or bank manager. When asked why they adopted this particular approach, it was suggested that the feedback provided by these people allowed them to obtain an indication of how their proposals might be received by the bank. The following remarks show how the type of advice required influences the source of advice used.

'If its serious then I'll get advice from whoever... if I just want a second opinion on something I'll probably ask a close friend ... anything else I ask my accountant...' (No. 12, p.11)

'If we want ideas on how the business could be improved ...we ask the staff what they think...if we have a specific problem we consult an expert...but this is rare...as our accountant is usually able to help...' (No.1, p.11)

7.3.vii. Public Sector Support

Just five of the OM's interviewed had used public sector support, namely Business Link. Although two of the other interviewees had received an information pack on the services that were available, neither had actually sought advice from this particular source. Another four also admitted to searching the Internet for organisations that offer support to small firms, although none had actually made contact.

The five who had consulted Business Link stated that they had done so in order to obtain advice on specific issues. This included recruiting staff, business rates, the law regarding tables and chairs being placed outside the premises, whether the government training schemes for those becoming self employed were available to all people who were new to small firm ownership and what if anything was available in the way of grants for the repair of buildings used solely for commercial use.

When asked to describe the quality of the services provided, four suggested that although the advisor was polite and friendly, service was very slow. Two of the interviewees also remarked that they were continually passed from one person to another and/or kept waiting on the end of the telephone. Significantly the interviewee who had enquired about OM training was informed that these programmes were available only to those starting new businesses. Although all five OM's were of the opinion that the information was vague, the advisers at Business Link were nevertheless able to supply contact numbers to those who required specialist information/advice. Three of the five interviewees who had used the services of Business Link remarked that there was very little support available to those who purchase going-concerns. The lack of facilities in this area is further highlighted by the comment below.

'I think these places are more geared towards new firms ...there certainly wasn't much they could offer me... I thought it would be a good idea to go on one of one these courses... learn the basics...if I had known that it was only for people starting new businesses, I would have told them that this is what we were doing...' (No. 8, p.13)

With regards to obtaining advice, the interviewee who contacted Business Link for information concerning business rates was advised to contact the local council even though he had explained beforehand that the staff in this department were not particularly helpful. Information concerning this issue was however despatched by post although this did not arrive until fourteen days later. The following remarks provide an indication of why public sector support provision was generally unpopular amongst the OMs interviewed.

'These places would be brilliant if they were run more efficiently... there is really nothing you can get from them that you can't get from the Citizens Advice Bureau...' (No.6, p.14)

'... I prefer to discuss my business problems with someone I know and trust... if there is something I want to know about finance I'll usually ask the small business advisor at the bank... anything else I ask my accountant...' (No.12, p.14)

7.3.viii. Specialist Support and Training

Ten out of the twelve OMs interviewed were in favour of support and training that could actively assist those who purchase established enterprises. When asked to explain why these facilities should be available, all ten suggested that taking over a going-concern much more difficult than it appears. Eight of the interviewees also argued that most of the facilities on offer are geared towards those starting new ventures.

When asked to consider whether there was also a need for specialist training eight of the interviewees felt that this should also be available. When asked why, they suggested that OM training of this type would help them gain insight into small business ownership and *'learn the basics...'* (No.6, p.25). Six further remarked that training programmes for those who purchase concerns would be particularly beneficial to people who had no experience of small business ownership. Five of the OM's also drew attention to the lack of appropriate training in this area. The comments below highlight the difficulties faced by purchasers of established enterprises in regards to training.

'This type of course would be no good for people like us ...starting a new business is not the same as buying an established business... I know...I've done both...' (No.6, p.25)

'If you're starting your own business... great...they can't do enough for you...but there's nothing for people like us...' (No.1, p.25)

'I automatically assumed that there were training courses for people who buy businesses...but there isn't...there's nothing...' (No.11, p.26)

When asked what form this training should take it was suggested that fast-track programmes would be the most effective way of teaching the basic elements of small business management. It was also argued that this type of training should take place before the business was actually taken over in order to learn as much as possible beforehand. Nine of the interviewees also remarked that finding the time for outside activities is extremely difficult after the business has been taken over.

When questioned on preferred methods of delivery all nine of these interviewees claimed that the traditional classroom situation should be avoided wherever possible. When asked to explain their answers they suggested that training programmes would be more effective if they adopted a less formal approach. Eight believed that support groups would be particularly helpful, as this would broaden the scope of the programme. When asked to describe in what ways, it was suggested that in addition to gaining insight into the basic OM skills and competences, group members would also have the opportunity to broach issues that are context-specific. Eight of the interviewees also remarked that these courses should be followed by a period of working alongside the present owners as this would enable OM's to accelerate their learning and develop skills more quickly. They also argued that formal training alone '*... couldn't develop practical know-how...*' (No.1, p.16). When it was suggested that this approach to formal training might not be cost effective the interviewees suggested that if this was the case, seminars could be restructured to allow more input from delegates.

Looking at strategies that would assist ongoing learning eight of the OM's interviewed felt that a mentor would be helpful particularly during the first six-twelve months. However it was argued that this would only be effective if the individual appointed was somebody they liked and trusted. Ten of the interviewees further remarked that their accountant was the '*...next best thing to a mentor...*' (No.2, p.26), as he/she provides both support and encouragement.

Those who had worked alongside the present owners prior to taking over the business were particularly keen on mentoring as they had experienced the advantages that can be afforded this type of support and guidance.

'It would be nice to know there is somebody there to help you even if it were only for a few weeks...it would have to be the right person though... just because I am willing to accept help it doesn't mean I want someone telling me what to do all the time...' (No.8, p.26)

7.3.ix. Formal Training

From the five interviewees who took formal training, two took technical training, two took OM training and one participated in both technical and management training. All but one took the training prior to becoming actively involved with the business. The interviewees that had taken technical training were of the opinion that this was more important than management training because it represented what the business actually does. They were also of the opinion that management skills could be developed on the job. The interviewees who had worked alongside the present owners suggested that this had taught them what managing a business involved. This period of time was therefore perceived as basic management training. The interviewees also remarked that working with the present owners enabled them not only gain insight into small business management generally but also how to manage that particular business.

'...We learnt more in that three weeks than if we had taken a university degree...the owner's talked us through everything and then helped us do it... if that isn't management training what is...' (No.1, p.16)

The two who took management training did so because their main concern was being able to run the business efficiently. They were particularly concerned with affecting a smooth take over as this would help maintain trade levels and preserve the firms goodwill.

'...When you buy a business your main concern is being able to take over where the others [owners] have left off...if you have no idea how to manage ... you'll find yourself in deep trouble...' (No.6, p.16)

The interviewee who took both technical and management training (a hairdresser) stated that the management training was by far the most important. The technical training taken on this occasion was to update existing skills. Although this particular interviewee had worked alongside the previous owner for two years (using a rent-a-chair scheme) being faced with the responsibility of small firm ownership had been a daunting experience.

'Renting a chair ... is one thing...being responsible for the whole business is another...you've got to know what you're doing...' (No.12, p.15)

All of the interviewees who had taken formal OM training claimed that the programmes tended to be geared towards those starting new businesses, which was reflected in the course material. It was therefore often necessary to ask the tutor specific questions in regards to taking over established businesses. However all of those who had taken this type of training felt that it had been beneficial, as it had introduced them to the concept of small business management and the key skills required.

7.3.x. Formal Training Abstention

All of those who had not undergone formal training (seven interviewees) remarked on their basic dislike of classroom situations. Several were also of the opinion that course leaders tend to be condescending. Although these perceptions were not attributable to past

experiences, four of the interviewees admitted to feeling self-conscious when placed in this particular group situation. Two further remarked that they preferred not to enter an environment where they might *'...look foolish in front of people who were more educated...'* (No.7, p.17)

'... So many of these things start with icebreakers... where everyone has to introduce themselves and all that jazz...I hate that... I prefer to take a back seat...' (No.7, p.17)

All but one of the interviewees remarked that this type of training was too controlling. When asked to expand on this they described the way everything is *'...laid down in stone...'* (No.5, p.18) regardless of the type of business people own or their individual circumstances. Three of the interviewees were also of the opinion that this method of training could be extremely tedious. When asked what they would prefer and how the uptake of such training might be encouraged, the majority of interviewees felt that such programmes would be more effective if they were presented in the form of a group discussion. They also felt that these programmes should be led by people who had practical experience of small firm ownership as this would enable participants to ask specific questions which could then be discussed as a group. The following remarks highlight the main benefits that could be afforded by this type of programme.

'Having an open forum would allow us to discuss the issues that affect our particular type of business as well as the general problems we are all likely to face...' (No. 8, p.17)

'Discussing business matters in a small group is not the same as being told what to do by some condescending know-it-all...you can talk about things that really matter instead of the usual mumbo jumbo these people yap on about...' (No.11, p.18)

'Although we are all in the same boat we still have different ideas and experiences to share... discussing it as a group would be so much better than having to sit in a classroom for hours on end...' (No.5, p.18)

7.3.xi. Informal Training

This question was preceded by an explanation of the basic concept of informal training, namely that it is the learning that is purposively directed in order to encourage the development of a specific skill (Barber, 2004) but that the control of the learning rests primarily with the learner (Marsick & Watkins, 1990). Having understood the definition and recognised the difference between formal and informal training, the OM's claimed that this type of activity took place on a regular basis. When asked to describe the nature of these activities, six of the interviewees suggested that this was difficult to explain as training was often carried out on impulse; the need for this type of activity having been spawned by the identification of a specific skill gap. One interviewee suggested that informal training tended to take place *'...on a need to know basis'* (No. 5, p19). However the remaining four OM's were able to provide several examples. For instance three of the interviewees described the way they regularly examined the accounts in order to learn *'...how it all worked...'* (No.4, p.20). Five also admitted to participating in role-playing activities to help improve the way they dealt with customers. Two of the OM's claimed that if there were a particular skill they needed to master they would practice it continually.

For those who employed staff, this type of training activity would often involve the whole team. However the majority of these training sessions would be used to learn/improve specific skills and/or experiment with new ideas. Although most of training that took place focused on the technical elements of small business management, the interviewees were nevertheless of the opinion that these activities also enabled them to improve their management skills. When asked to describe the key benefits of informal training, all of the OMs claimed that it increased their understanding of '*...how things should be done...*' (No.4, p.20)

'...It's all about getting to know the business and how it works... You also find out how not to do things...which is even more important...you wouldn't learn things like that on a training course... ' (No.1, p.20)

Those that had worked alongside the present owners suggested that this was a typical example of informal training, as they were taught specific aspects of the business and how it should be managed. In an attempt to define informal training within this context the OMs referred to the guidance and advice provided by the present owner who would often explain precisely what was required and '*... how to do it...*' (No.1, p.20). Significantly informal training was perceived as being more appropriate and accommodating than formal training, as formal training programmes tend to assume that all small firm owners have the same needs.

Other benefits that could be afforded by informal training were that it could be targeted towards specific needs whereas formal training tends to focus on generic issues. Five of the

OMs also drew attention to the course content of these programmes, which often contained material that was irrelevant.

7.3.xii. Working Alongside the Present Owners

All the OMs who had worked alongside the present owners (seven) insisted that this was essential if the business is to be taken over successfully (i.e. smoothly and with relatively few problems). They were also of the opinion that this was the most effective way of learning about the business and the skills required to manage it. The following comments provide evidence that those who purchase established enterprises should wherever possible spend a period of time working alongside the present owners prior to taking over the business.

'...No amount of formal training can equal what can be learnt from becoming physically involved with the business before taking it over...' (No.9, p.22)

'The owners ...taught us everything we needed to know about running the business... we made mistakes but then who wouldn't...that's how you learn...' (No.7, p.21)

'...The only way you can really learn about a business is to run it...' (No.3, p.22)

For those who inherited employees each were of the opinion that working alongside the present owners had helped them to gain acceptance. This is highlighted in the following comments

'It was a bit difficult at first but once they saw how well we got along with the owners... everything was fine...' (No.1, p.22)

'We would have preferred to choose our own employees ... but working with the owners allowed us to get to know each other... they've been a godsend since... it's almost as though they feel responsible for our success...' (No.10, p.21)

'I think the only way you are ever going to get the staff on your side is to work with them before you actually take over...working alongside the owners for two weeks enabled us to do this ...' (No.7, p.22)

From the five OM's who had not worked alongside the present owners, four expressed regret at not having done so, each being of the opinion that people who purchase small enterprises *'...should get to know the business before they actually take it over...'* (No.9, p.22)

They were therefore of the opinion that had this particular course of action been taken, many of the problems that they had experienced initially could have been avoided. Two of the interviewees also remarked that people who purchase established enterprises are often under the misconception that everything will be straightforward as *'...the business is already up and running...'*

'I thought that buying a going-concern would be easy ... for one thing you haven't got the hassle of getting it all up and running... all looks dead simple... it isn't... if you don't know what you're doing you'll lose the lot...' (No.9, p.22)

All of the interviewees that had worked alongside the present owners (seven) also suggested that one of the main benefits this afforded was the amount that could be learnt within a relatively short space of time. The fast-track nature of this type of 'training' is

therefore invaluable, as those who take over established enterprises '*... need to be able to carry on from where the previous owners left off...*' (No.1, p.22)

7.3.xiii. The Most Effective Single Source of Learning

When asked which single source of learning had been the most beneficial all of the interviewees who had spent time working alongside the present owners claimed that this was the most effective way of developing the skills required for successful small business ownership/management. From those who had not worked alongside existing owners, the majority was of the opinion that their accountant and/or bank manager was the richest source of learning. When asked why, they suggested that being able to obtain information and advice on a wide range of issues had enabled them to acquire '*...invaluable knowledge...*' (No.5, p.23) that could be used to improve their management skills and abilities.

All but two of the OM's interviewed remarked that they had also learnt a great deal from themselves, particularly during the take-over phase and the two-three month period that followed. When asked to elaborate, reference was made to the amount they had learnt from the mistakes that were made whilst they were '*...still finding their feet...*' (No.5, p.23).

The following remarks illustrate the way purchasers of established enterprises learn from practical experience

'...Even with the most expert guidance you're still going to make mistakes... if you make a mess of something once you probably won't do it again ... that's how you learn...' (No.8, p.24)

'After we had been there a few months we tried doing things a bit differently...just to see if it worked...sometimes it did, sometimes it didn't... but we learnt a lot all the same...'
(No.5, p.23)

7.3. xiv. Measuring Success

With regards to measuring success, the majority of interviewees (ten) believed that success was attributable to factors other than financial performance and profitability. Aware that the intention here was to examine the success of the business rather than personal achievement, the OMs nevertheless remained adamant that the success of a business could not realistically be determined by its financial health.

The following comments reveal the various ways success was quantified.

'...A steady rise in profits is all very well but it's the number of regular customers that determine whether a business is successful...' (No.5, p.27)

'It's all about achievement.... making customers happy etcetera. When somebody comes into my salon and says that so-and-so recommended me...that's how I know my business is successful...' (No.12, p.28)

'...When we receive favourable comments in our guest book that reflect the effort we've made to make to make peoples stay enjoyable... that's success...' (No.10, p.28)

'Making money is all very well but there is a lot more to it than that.... if the business was making a financial loss but I had lots of satisfied clients I'd have to say the business itself

was successful... I know several businesses that are going downhill fast but because the owner is a whiz with figures the bank is always happy...you can hardly call the business a success though can you... ' (No.7, p.28).

The two interviewees that believed success was determined by how the business performed financially, claimed that this was the only true way of measuring the firm's effectiveness. However one was of the opinion that society's obsession with money and materialism '*...often narrows peoples perceptions of success... ' (No.6, p.27)*

7.4. Summary

The findings produced from these interviews show several links between skill prioritisation and the fact that the business was purchased as an established enterprise (Proposition 3). For example the emphasis placed on customer relations was often spawned by the need to maintain the goodwill of the business. Similarly the ability to manage staff was particularly important where the OM's had inherited employees. However whilst skill prioritisation is often influenced by small firm ownership within this context, the interviews failed to identify any skills that are particular to this sub-sector. The findings also provide strong support for Proposition 1, namely that those who purchase established enterprises require particular support. Although no evidence was produced to suggest that preferred methods of training are influenced by the fact that the business had been purchased as an established enterprise (Proposition 5), the results nevertheless showed that these OM's require fast track training, as they evidently need to learn a lot very quickly. Proposition 5 therefore cannot be entirely rejected. The findings also showed that informal training activities are popular amongst those who purchase established enterprises and moreover that this type of activity is likely to take place frequently.

However the time spent working alongside the present owner prior to taking over the business is clearly the richest source of learning available to those who purchase established enterprises, as this helps to develop a wide range of skills, all of which are relevant to the business. Accountants are also a valuable learning source and for the majority of OM's this was the most frequently used source of external advice. Significantly the success of the business was rarely measured against the firm's financial performance, the majority of interviewees perceiving success in terms of customer satisfaction and/or the popularity of the business. The interviews also suggested that success indicators are likely to change as different phases of ownership are entered. For example in the early stages of ownership success was often based on the smoothness of the take over. However once the OM's had become established, success was measured against other factors namely the throughput of customers, customer satisfaction and the realisation of personal objectives.

7.5. The OM Interviews and the Accountants' Interviews: A Comparison of Findings

There are a significant number of similarities between the findings of the OM interviews and findings of the accountants' interviews. For example both data sets showed that those who purchase established enterprises have different support and training needs from start-ups and/or established firms that are owned by the founder member. Similarly the interviews' revealed that the majority of skills and competences are developed through experiential learning and informal training activities. However whilst the OM interviews showed that much could be gained from working alongside the present owners, the accountants made no reference to this particular source of learning.

Significantly the popularity of accountants as sources of advice and learning were highlighted in both sets of interviews, each showing that this is the most frequently used source of support and assistance.

With regards to the skills required for successful small business ownership, the interviews' revealed that people skills are particularly important to those who purchase established enterprises and that having the ability to manage the business is considered essential if trade levels are to be maintained and the firm's goodwill preserved.

The following chapter examines the overall results of the study and what the findings imply. This section also proposes two frameworks that can be used to assist skill development and ongoing learning amongst those who have purchased established businesses.

CHAPTER 8

Discussion of the Results and Framework Development

8.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the key findings of the research and what may be concluded from the results. A great deal of valuable information was generated by the survey (Phase 1 of the research), including the surfacing of issues that required further examination. Particular attention is nevertheless paid to the findings produced by the OM and Accountants interviews (Phases 2 and 3 of the research), as the qualitative data was the richest source of information in regards to fulfilling the research objectives (page 8-9). This section of the thesis therefore examines, the influence of ownership context on skill prioritisation; the development of OM skills through informal training and experiential learning; the reasons why particular sources of advice are more frequently used than others and the reasons why formal training is generally unpopular amongst those who purchase established enterprises. The chapter also discusses how purchasers of established firms might best be supported in regards to their training and learning needs. The final section therefore focuses on the construction of a framework that will actively assist and encourage skill development and on-going learning amongst this particular sub-sector.

8.2. Discussion of the Research Propositions

The first section of the chapter discusses each of the following propositions which the research sought to investigate

Proposition 1: Particular support is required for those who take over/purchase

established enterprises

Proposition 2: The skill priorities of those purchasing established enterprises will be influenced by business type.

Proposition 3: The skill priorities of those taking over established businesses will be significantly influenced by ownership within this particular context

Proposition 4: The Skill Priorities of experienced OM's will differ from those who are relatively new to small firm ownership (experienced being defined as having owned a business before and/or where the OM in question has been operating their current business for more than two years)

Proposition 5: Preferred methods of training will be influenced by ownership context

Proposition 1: Particular support is required for those who take over/purchase established enterprises

Although comparatively few of OM's questioned had taken training, the majority were nevertheless of the opinion that training should be available for those who purchase established enterprises. The accountants also suggested that this particular form of training could be beneficial, particularly if were taken before the OM's became actively involved with the business. The support for this proposition is therefore very strong. However the results of the OM's interviews showed that this type of training should avoid, wherever possible, the traditional classroom teacher-pupil principle, as this particular approach is extremely unpopular. Evidence was also produced that suggests

that the course content of such programmes should be less generic in nature and provide OM's with the opportunity to address issues that are context specific. Although the OM's dislike of traditional training methods helps to explain the low take-up of formal training, it should however be noted that the respondents' claims might not be translated into actual behaviours (Lapierre, 1934; De Vaus, 1991). It is therefore difficult to predict with any degree of accuracy to what extent these training facilities would actually be used, if they were available.

Proposition 2: The skill priorities of those who purchase established enterprises will be influenced by business type

The results produced by MANOVA initially indicated that skill prioritisation was not significantly influenced by business type even though previous studies have produced evidence to the contrary (Segal Quince Wickstead, 1988; DTI, 1999a). However the results generated by the OM interviews suggested that the type of business respondents owned would occasionally influence the way skills are prioritised. In these instances skill prioritisation could be linked to the elements that are critical to the success of that particular industry (Scott & Roberts, 1988; Norman, 1991). For example having the ability to recruit the appropriate staff was particularly important amongst those who owned small hotels and guest houses as these people often need to employ additional staff during the high season. Support for this proposition is therefore mixed. However, it should be noted that the conclusions drawn are based on the findings from research that involved just three types of industry, each of which focuses primarily on people skills (Rannie, 1989). It is therefore postulated that if the study had included OM's from other industries, for example agriculture and/or manufacturing, the findings might have

been very different, as OMs operating in these industries tend to focus on the effectiveness of systems and operations (Rannie, 1989; Martin & Staines, 1994).

Proposition 3: The skill priorities of those purchasing established enterprises will be significantly influenced by ownership within this context

The survey was too limited in scope to determine whether these two variables were linked. However the results generated by the OM and accountants interviews indicated that skill prioritisation was frequently influenced by ownership context. For example in both instances having the ability to manage the business generally and being able establish good customer relations was closely associated with the preservation of the firm's goodwill. Support for this proposition is therefore very strong.

The emphasis placed on the need to build good customer relations is supportive of the research conducted by Martin & Staines, (1994), who found that the most important skill amongst their sample was the ability to build good customer relations. Similarly Ford, (2006) argues that businesses need to '*... go out of their way to build professional and long lasting relationships with customers...as this will define which companies are successful and which are not*' (p.3).

The need for good people skills was extended to the management of staff particularly in instances where employees had been inherited, as these people could be difficult to manage. Although the majority of these problems are likely to be temporary, as the staff were merely reacting to change (Kanter, 1984), the effective management of employees is nevertheless considered crucial if OMs are to build effective working relationships with the staff they inherit. The importance of these skills is further

highlighted by the fact that current legislation often makes it extremely difficult to dismiss staff (Acas, 2006; DTI, 2006) and replace them with people that have been selected personally. The emphasis placed on this skill is therefore linked to ownership context, as this particular issue is unlikely to affect those embarking on start-ups and/or established firms that are owned by the founder member(s) who are able to select their employees personally.

Although having the ability to manage the business was highly prioritised by all the OMs surveyed, the OM interviews revealed that the amount of emphasis placed on this particular skill was significantly influenced by ownership context. The main reason for is that those taking over established enterprises need to be able to '*...hold the business together...*' in order to maintain trade/performance levels and preserve the firm's goodwill. Although the success and profitability of all small firms is strongly dependent on good management skills (Storey, 1994; Huang & Brown, 1999; Thompson & Gray, 1999) those launching new enterprises are not faced with the additional problem of having to maintain the firm's goodwill. Moreover new businesses are in a better position to build trade levels gradually whilst those who take over established businesses are compelled to maintain a particular level of trade.

Even though none of the OMs were looking to finance the purchase of a business, a significant number of respondents nevertheless claimed that knowing how to raise capital is 'extremely important'. Initially this suggested one of two things. Firstly that the volume of trade had decreased and additional finance was needed to 'prop up' the business or alternatively the owner(s) intended to expand and/or develop the business in a way that required further capital investment. However, further questioning revealed that capital was often required for the implementation of specific improvements.

Although none of the OM's expressed a desire to grow and/or expand, the majority of interviewees nevertheless intended to implement a number of physical changes to the business and/or introduce new product/services.

With regards to business planning, which in the context of this study is defined as budgeting and planning for the future, the research showed that whilst the majority of OM's rarely make formal long-term plans they often engaged in short-term planning, using informal methods. However it is difficult to determine whether this particular approach to planning is linked to ownership context, as the formulation of business plans using informal strategies is not well documented.

The fact that having the ability to manage family members of staff was not considered a high priority suggests that the majority of the OM's questioned did not employ members of the family.

Significantly the findings of the OM interviews also showed that the low rating of particular skills is also influenced by ownership context. For example the low priority given to health and safety issues could be attributed to the fact that policies for complying with these rules and regulations had already been implemented by the previous owner(s). This particular viewpoint is clearly linked to ownership context, as unlike new businesses, purchasers of established enterprises are rarely required to design and implement a range of Health and Safety policies and procedures from scratch. Although research shows that the bureaucratic nature of this type of legislation often hampers small firms (NatWest/SBRT, 2000a; Hughes, 2001), this was not a major concern amongst the OM's sampled.

The most significant finding in regards to skill prioritisation is the way it can often be linked to the fact that the business was purchased as a going-concern. For example the OM interviews revealed that the ability to manage the business generally and build effective customer relations is essential to (1) maintaining trade levels, (2) preserving the goodwill of the firm/retaining existing customers and (3) holding the business together. Similarly the ability to manage staff is particularly important to those who have inherited staff, as there are a number of difficulties that can arise, particularly if the employees concerned demonstrate a strong resistance to the firm's change of ownership. The emphasis placed on this particular skill therefore focuses on the ability (1) to gain acceptance and (2) build effective working relationships.

Whilst the prioritisation of skills can often be linked to ownership context and business type, the research showed that skill prioritisation often changes in accordance with short-term objectives. For example a number of the OMs interviewed suggested that whilst marketing was not currently a major priority it could be important in the future if they decide to launch new products and/or services. Although it is difficult to link shifts in skill prioritisation to ownership context and/or business type, these findings nevertheless support the results of research conducted by Norman, (1991) and Curran et al., (1996a), who suggest that the importance attached to particular skills is often dependent on current objectives. The prioritisation of particular skills is therefore likely to change, as different objectives are set.

Proposition 4: The Skill Priorities of experienced OMs will differ from those who are relatively new to small firm ownership

In regards to the way skills were prioritised for (1) inclusion on OM training programmes and (2) for successful small business ownership, the output from MANOVA showed that there were no statistically significant differences between OMs who had owned a business before and those who had not. Similarly MANOVA also showed that there were no statistically significant differences between the OMs who had owned the business for less than two years and those who had owned the business for longer than two years. The proposition is therefore rejected. Significantly the OM and accountants interviews provided no evidence that could help to account for these findings. However both sets of interviews produced similar results in regards to the skills that are considered the most important.

Proposition 5: Preferred methods of training will be influenced by ownership context

Although the survey showed that the OMs tended to favour seminars and day release programmes, further questioning revealed that this was not linked to ownership context. This proposition is therefore rejected. However the research established a need for fast-track training, as those who purchase established enterprises need to learn as much as possible within a relatively short space of time. The need for this particular mode of training is because those who take-over established enterprises need to 'hit the ground running', whereas those embarking on new ventures can build up the business gradually. This particular factor is also reflected in the claim that this type of training should take place before the business is actually taken over: the OMs and the accountants both emphasising this particular point. However whilst preferred methods of training could not be linked to ownership context the research showed that this is nevertheless influenced by a number of factors. This issue is therefore discussed further later on in the chapter.

8.3. The Take-up of Formal Training

Given that the research aims to identify the learning sources that are the most important to purchasers of established enterprises and moreover how the needs of these OMs might best be supported, the take-up of formal training is clearly important.

Although the research showed that the uptake of formal training was low, very few respondents claimed that this was due to a lack of interest. By contrast the study revealed that the reluctance to undergo formal training was often attributable to a number of specific constraints. This tends to support the arguments presented by Gibb, (1985) who suggests that the low uptake of formal training is rarely due to apathy and indifference. He also argues that the poor take-up of training is likely to be influenced by underlying factors which, being complex in nature are difficult to identify. The findings produced from the OM interviews offer strong support for this argument. For example, a significant number of OMs claimed that they felt extremely uncomfortable when faced with in classroom situations; those with a limited education being particularly vulnerable. The majority of the OMs interviewed also argued that formal training programmes often contain material that has little bearing on the realities of small business ownership. This argument was further supported by the findings of the accountants' interviews, where it was suggested that the relevance and practicality of OM training programmes is often arguable. Other factors that created barriers to the uptake of training included the exclusion of established firms from government-sponsored schemes and a lack of confidence in course leaders.

Although there are numerous factors, which influence an individual's motivation to take any form of training (Mathieu et al., 1992; Antonacopoulou, 2001) the low uptake of formal training in this instance could not be attributed to a lack of willingness to

train; the majority of OM's being keen to participate in activities that would help them develop the appropriate skills and competences. Moreover the results from the OM and accountants' interviews provided strong evidence that those who take over established enterprises would seriously consider taking formal training if suitable programmes could be found. It is therefore concluded that the low take-up of formal training is primarily due to specific constraints, although there are clearly a number of factors that may influence OM's attitudes towards this type of training. These issues are discussed in detail below.

8.3.i. An Emphasis on Technical Training

The fact that most of the training taken in conjunction with buying the business was technical tends to suggest that those who purchase established enterprises are more likely to focus on the development of skills that are industry specific than management skills. This is supportive of the findings of Martin & Staines (1994) whose research showed that many small firm owners believe that technical and/or product knowledge is as important as managerial competence. In this instance the focus on technical training could also be linked to the fact that a significant number of OM's had no previous experience of the industry in which they were operating; the survey indicating that just 11% of respondents had purchased a business in an industry that was familiar.

Although the take-up of technical training was significantly higher than the take-up of management training, the importance of effective management skills was nevertheless acknowledged by all the OM's interviewed, many of whom had worked alongside the present owners solely for this purpose. Given also that the majority of those questioned frequently participated in informal training activities, it is therefore concluded that whilst formal training is often appropriate for the development of technical skills,

managerial skills are usually best developed on the job. This particular notion is also supported by the results of the accountants interviews; the majority of interviewees being of the opinion that the majority of OM skills and competencies are developed experientially.

8.3.ii. The Employment of Informal Training/Learning Strategies

The results of the OM interviews showed that the majority of OMs preferred to employ informal training methods to help develop the skills required for managing their business successfully. The main reasons for this are the flexibility that this particular method affords and the opportunity it provides for OMs to focus on the practical elements of skill development. This aspect of informal training is particularly important as a number of OMs claimed that formal training programmes are too theoretical; an argument which is strongly supported by the findings of other studies (Gibb, 1995; Perren et al., 1999; PIU, 2001). The fact that formal training programmes often contain material that is perceived as being irrelevant to small firm ownership/management provides a further reason why informal training is often more appropriate: the activities that take place focusing specifically on issues that are important to the business. This point is reflected in the argument put forward by Mumford (1993) who claims that formal training will be of little use if it is too '*... different and distant from what managers actually do ...*'(p.139). The fact that formal training programmes rarely include issues that are context specific (Carrier, 1999) further highlights the limitations of this particular form of training, which it is argued is often too narrow in scope to encompass the skills required to perform tasks in the workplace (Curran et al., 1995). This particular argument tends also to illustrate the relatively small contribution that formal training makes to the overall learning process (Dearden, 1992; Maguire et al., 1993; Park, 1994), particularly as there is no guarantee that this form of training will

actually result in learning (Handy, 1989; Senge, 1990; Lees, 1992; Antonacopoulou, 1996, 1999, 2001).

8.3.iii. Alternative Learning Sources

The overall results of the study showed that those who purchase established enterprises learn a great deal from the advice and assistance provided by accountants, bank managers and other professionals whom they trust. Where OM's are able to tap into reliable learning sources that are easily accessed, formal training is therefore perceived as having limited value. Although this appears to contradict the findings of the survey and the OM and accountants' interviews, which suggest that formal training programmes should be available to those who purchase established businesses, this point is arguable, as the low take-up of training was rarely attributable to an intrinsic dislike of training of this type.

8.3.iv. Financial constraints

Although the survey suggested that limited finances also influenced the uptake of formal training, none of the OM's interviewed claimed that this factor had prevented them from taking training. Given also that the findings of previous studies show that OM's are equally reluctant to participate in government-sponsored initiatives (Curran & Blackburn, 2000), it is therefore unlikely that a shortage of financial resources significantly influences training uptake

8.3.v. Time Shortage

The results produced by the survey indicated that time shortage was the main inhibitor of formal training uptake; over 50% of those surveyed stating that they were unable to find the time to train. These findings support a number of other studies (e.g. Gibb,

1996, Kerr & McDougall, 1999; Henderson & Sutherland 2000a), which show that time constraints continually act as a barrier to training, particularly where it involves spending time away from the workplace (Cambridge SBRC, 1992; Abbott, 1993). The fact that training is more likely to take place prior to the purchase/take-over of the business tends to underscore this point, as time constraints are more likely to affect those who are actively involved with business operations.

However it is interesting to note that where OM's were in a position to delegate, namely when the business was owned jointly and/or was staffed, the take-up of training (amongst those who had taken training post-take-over) was unaffected. Although this tends to imply that time constraints affect all small businesses regardless of ownership status, the findings of the OM interviews revealed that whilst time shortage might be a contributory factor, the low take-up of training is mainly attributable to the inappropriateness of the training, unsatisfactory styles of delivery and exclusion from government sponsored schemes. It is therefore concluded that whilst time constraints can make it difficult to combine training with small business ownership, it is not the primary cause of low training uptake.

It is also postulated that if purchasers of established enterprises had access to the appropriate training, more effort would be made to make the time to train.

8.4. Training Needs

The prioritisation of skills for inclusion on training programmes is of particular concern as the research aims to identify the key areas where support and training are most needed.

Significantly the findings show that skill prioritisation within this context is more likely to be linked to ownership context than business type.

This helps to explain why the key areas for skill development cited here often differed from the priority areas suggested by other studies. For example O'Neill (1990) found that finance and marketing were the main areas where training was needed whilst Martin & Staines (1994) and Ford (2006) discovered that people skills were the main concern. Although different surveys tend to produce different results, the key areas for skill development in this instance were also linked to ownership context; the emphasis placed on the need to build satisfactory customer relations being largely attributable to the need to preserve the goodwill of the business and maintain the throughput of customers. The OM's were also of the opinion that purchasers of established enterprises need to be capable of managing staff effectively, especially where the purchase of a business includes the inheritance of employees.

Despite the significance of these findings it should however be noted that small firm owners tend to have different perceptions of their training needs than those of training providers (Gill, 1985; Curran & Stanworth, 1989). Moreover where the OM concerned is new to small firm ownership this problem is often exacerbated, as these people are often too inexperienced to judge their training needs effectively (Gee, 1987; O'Neill, 1990). However given that the majority of OM's who participated in the research had owned the business for a significant amount of time, perceptions of training needs are likely to be reasonably accurate. The fact that the interviewees were able to justify and explain their answers provide a further indication of the high level of accuracy. Notably, these findings were also supported by the results generated by the accountants

interviews; the key areas identified for skill development being identical to those suggested by the OMs.

Although the research was able to identify a number of key areas for skill development; it is nevertheless concluded that the individual needs of the firm should be established before a specific course of action is implemented.

8.5. Preferred Styles of Training Delivery

Given that the research aims to determine how specialist support and training might best be delivered, establishing which styles of training are the most favoured is clearly important. Although the survey suggested that training programmes designed to assist purchasers of established enterprises should be presented in the form of either seminars or evening classes, further questioning revealed that classroom situations were generally disliked. This helps to account for the popularity of seminars, which do not typify the traditional teacher-pupil approach (Carrier, 1999; Henderson & Sutherland 2000). Although day-release courses tend to be presented via this method (Carrier, 1999) the popularity of this style of delivery is nevertheless supportive of other studies which show that small firm owners tend to prefer short practical courses (O'Neill 1990; Hogarth-Scott Jones, 1993; Soriano, 2002).

Despite the fact that OM NVQs' are designed to help OMs develop entrepreneurial skills within the workplace (Small Firms Lead Body, 1996; London Chamber of Commerce & Industry, 1997; University of Oxford Delegacy of Local Examinations, 1997), this particular method of training was barely acknowledged by the OMs questioned. The fact that the general disinterest in NVQs was often attributable to the complex wording and lack of straightforwardness, supports the argument put forward

by Rankin (1995), Pickard (1996) and Perry (1998) who suggest that this aspect of NVQs is often confusing and difficult to follow. However in this instance low take-up was mainly due to the inappropriateness of the course material. These findings are supportive of the argument put forward by Littlefield (1994) and Antonacopoulou & Fitzgerald (1996), who claim that OM NVQs often have little relevance to the needs of either the individual or the company. It should nevertheless be noted that whilst this particular form of training is not without problems the low uptake of NVQs may also have been influenced by the fact that small business owners frequently lack the framework and language for competence based training (Thomson, 1992).

Although previous research has shown that different types of industry often prefer different forms of training (Curran et al., 1995) very little evidence was produced to support this claim. It is postulated that this could be due to the fact that the sample comprised OMs from just three industries, tourism, retail services and professional services, which made it difficult to examine this particular issue in detail. However the methods of training preferred by those in tourism tends to reflect the findings of Abbott (1993) who suggests that the skills required for the hospitality industry, are more likely to be developed from within the firm whereas industries such as design and marketing often depend on formal qualifications that can only be obtained outside the organisation. Given that the majority of OMs were nevertheless aware of the benefits of formal training tends also to support the argument that qualified personnel are important to all organisations regardless of the nature of the industry (Keep, 1989; DTI/DfEE, 2001; PIU, 2001; HM Treasury, 2002).

8.6. The Take-Up of Support Provision

Given that the research seeks to determine how the needs of those who purchase established enterprises might best be supported, the uptake and usage of public agency support provision is clearly significant.

Very few of the OMs questioned had used the facilities provided by public sector support networks (e.g. Business Link). The reason for the poor take-up of these services is highlighted in Table 8.1

However the reluctance to use public agency support reflects the results produced by other studies including a report by Confederation of British Industry (CBI) (2005), which showed that small firms continue to be under-served by support providers.

The OMs were often unaware of the services on offer
The facilities on offer were often perceived as being unsuitable for those who purchase established enterprises
The criteria set for acceptance on to government-sponsored schemes was such that owners of established enterprises (including firms that had changed owners) were often excluded
The facilities available were often geared towards start-ups and were therefore ill equipped to assist those who purchase established enterprises
The advice provided (particularly over the telephone) was often vague and inconsistent
The OMs preferred to use alternative sources of information/advice, which had proven to be effective on prior occasions
The OMs felt they had no need for the services of public support providers' as they were able to obtain the advice/assistance they required elsewhere

Table 8.1. The prime causes of the low uptake of public agency support

Although the low take-up of support has been attributed to a number of factors, it nevertheless continues to give cause for concern (Smallbone et al., 1993; Curran &

Blackburn, 2000). As a number of the accountants interviewed were unaware of the services on offer and/or had no knowledge of where support could be obtained locally, it is therefore concluded that public agency support networks are still experiencing problems in regards to low market penetration (Storey, 1994; Curran et al., 1996; Curran & Blackburn, 2000). Although support providers are aware that different industries have different support and training requirements (Burrows & Curran, 1989; NatWest, 1995), the results generated by the research show that training and support needs are also influenced by ownership context. For example start-ups tend to focus on the launch of the business and becoming established within the marketplace (Henry et al., 2004), whereas purchasers of established enterprises are more concerned with preserving the goodwill of the firm and maintaining the throughput of customers. Moreover those who purchase established business are also focused on learning as much as possible within a relatively short space of time. Given the difference in support and training needs, facilities that are geared towards start-ups will therefore be of little use to those who purchase established enterprises, as the needs of each are often very different. The lack of popularity of support providers amongst the OMs questioned also reflects the argument put forward by Gooderham et al., (2004) who claim that the relatively small impact government agencies have on small businesses is often attributable to the tendency to ignore the idiosyncratic characteristics of their clients. Consequently small business owners find it extremely difficult to integrate and utilise the advice provided.

Although it has been shown that the needs of established firms are generally more complex than the needs of start-ups (Curran & Blackburn, 2000) the research revealed that these needs may be further complicated when the business changes owners, particularly in instances where the new owner has limited inexperience and/or is

unfamiliar with small business ownership. Support and training that is suitable for established firms that are owned by the founder member is therefore unlikely to be suitable for those who purchase such businesses, as the context of ownership is unique in both cases. This particular difference also underscores the findings of previous studies where it is argued that the generic nature of the training available through support networks is one of the main reasons why it suits very few people (Deakins & Sparrow, 1991; Marshall et al., 1995; Thomson & Gray, 1999; Carrier, 1999; Hussey, 2005).

The fact that the OMs and accountants were in favour of training and support provision that is able to accommodate the particular needs of those who purchase established businesses, is reflected in the findings of previous studies, which suggests that small firm owners would be more willing to use the training facilities provided by support networks if suitable programmes were available (Cosh & Hughes, 1998). However given that the study showed that purchasers of established enterprises have experienced problems with support networks provides further evidence that public sector support continues to fail small firms.

Although public support was rarely used by the OMs questioned, advice was frequently sought from professionals who operate within the private sector. These findings reflect the results of a study conducted by Cosh & Hughes (1998) who found that 98% of small firms had used specialist external advice in at least one area of activity over the previous three years. Weighting the sample proportions to those of the size distribution of all British businesses, Bennett et al., (2000) discovered that 86% of all firms employing less than five hundred people (excluding sole-proprietors) used external advice between 1994 and 1997. Given that most of the advice was obtained through the

private sector reflects current trends which suggest that whilst the use of external advice is generally on the increase (Keeble & Nachum, 2001) the use of government sponsored agencies is declining (CBR, 1999; Hussey, 2005). The popularity of private sector support therefore reflects the findings of a number of studies, which show that this particular source of advice is generally more effective than that which is available through the public sector (Mole, 2002; Bennett & Robson, 2003; Gooderham et al., 2004).

The fact that those who purchase established enterprises are more likely to obtain advice from their accountant also supports the findings of Bennett et al., (2000) who with recourse to Storey (1994) and Bennett & Robson (1999b) found that the main source of supply is private sector professionals, namely accountants, followed by solicitors, banks and consultants. By contrast public sector support bodies played only a minor role in scale and intensity. These particular findings are reflected in the figures generated by a survey conducted by Centre for Business Research (CBR) (1999) which showed that whilst private sector professionals provided 92% of the sole source and 86% of all sources of advice used by SMEs (N=2,500), public sector services accounted for just 8% of sole sources and 14% of all sources of advice (Bennett & Robson 1999a). Where evidence has been produced to the contrary (e.g. Smallbone et al., 1993) the results can often be attributed to the high proportion of start-ups contained within the sample, which are often perceived as being the main contenders for public sector support (Priest, 1997; Blackburn et al., 1999; Curran & Blackburn, 2000; Hussey, 2005).

8.7. Informal training and learning

Informal training and learning are of particular interest because research aims to (1) identify the learning sources that purchasers of established enterprises are most likely to exploit and (2) formulate strategies that will actively assist skill development and ongoing learning.

Whilst the take-up of formal training was low, the OM interviews revealed that those who purchase established enterprises frequently participate in informal training activities. Although the majority of activities took place after the business had been taken over, the time spent working alongside the present owners beforehand also included a number of informal training activities. The popularity of informal training can however be attributed to its flexibility and hands-on approach. For example the research showed that this particular method of training (1) makes it easier to address key areas for development; (2) enables OMs to select the activity that best meets the training need; (3) carry out ad-hoc training as and when the need arises and (4) involve the whole working team as and where necessary. Moreover unlike formal training time is rarely a problem as activities can be incorporated into the working routine. These findings therefore support the results of other studies, which show that small firm owners frequently engage in a wide range of informal training activities (Hendry et al., 1991; Goss & Jones, 1992; Vickerstaff, 1992; Curran et al., 1993a; Nove et al., 1995). The fact that these training sessions often include the staff tends also to reflect the argument put forward by Watkins (1996) who suggests that learning is particularly beneficial when it is achieved through group activities where it becomes '*...a collective interdependent experience...*' (p.91).

Moreover the remarks made by the OMs in regards to the benefits of informal training underscore the argument put forward by number of writers who claim that informal training is often the major source of learning in small firms (Hendry et al., 1995; Rae & Carswell, 2000; Skule & Reichborn, 2002; Zambarlouskous & Constantelous, 2002; Gray & Maybey, 2005). In this instance however, informal training could also be linked to ownership context context, working alongside the present owners being a typical example.

8.8. The Questionable Relationship Between Training and Business Performance

Given that one of the objectives of the research is to create a framework that will actively assist skill development and ongoing learning, the relationship between training and business performance is particularly important, as it will help to determine the role played by training in the overall learning process.

The research shows that the success of firms that are purchased as going concerns is dependent on effective management and people skills. Although this supports the notion that managerial competence is essential to business survival and growth (MaCrae, 1992; Gibb, 1997; Jennings & Beaver, 1997), the relationship between training and the financial performance of the firm, remains arguable (Storey & Westhead, 1994; Westhead & Storey, 1996; Thomson & Gray, 1999). The results generated by the study tend to underscore this point, as the majority of OMs who had experienced a large increase in sales had not taken formal training. Similarly many of those who claimed that the business was 'very successful' and/or 'successful' had not participated in formal training activities. The OM interviews revealed that the main reason for this is the way success is measured. In this instance success was often measured against factors that were unrelated to the firm's financial performance,

namely, customer satisfaction, the throughput of customers, the volume of new customers and the ability to preserve the goodwill of the firm. It is therefore postulated that the effectiveness of formal training will be measured against improvements in these particular areas and not against the way the firm performs financially. Clearly this makes it difficult to establish a link between the take-up of formal training and the impact it may have on the firm's financial performance, even though it has been claimed that customer satisfaction can act as a key indicator of the firm's financial health (Anderson & Fornell, 2000) and growth potential (Burnes, et al., 2000; Hallowell & Sclesinger, 2000; Zahorik et al., 2000; Haber & Reichel, 2005). Acknowledging that it is extremely difficult to measure the impact of formal training on business performance, the research nevertheless supports the notion that the firm's financial performance is likely to depend to some extent on the level of custom and the retention of the firm's goodwill. The suggestion that formal training has little impact on the firm's financial performance must therefore be treated with caution. However given this issue is clearly beyond the scope of the study, further research is required that focuses on the effect of formal training in areas that are not directly related to the firms financial performance but which are likely to have a significant impact on it.

Although it is possible to explain why formal training appears to have little effect on business performance these findings do however contradict the claim that formal training significantly enhances business performance (ACOST, 1990; Confederation of British Industry, 1993; Midland Bank, 1993; Small Business Bureau, 1993; DTI, 1995). Accepting that the majority these reports refer only to start-ups, such claims nevertheless imply that there is a link between formal training and financial performance.

By contrast research that has been conducted into the impact of training on established firms shows that formal training activities have little overall effect on the firm's financial performance (Stanworth et al., 1992; Marshall et al., 1993, 1995). These findings are clearly supportive of the results produced here, although this is perhaps not surprising as research that involves established firms is likely to include amongst the sample, businesses that were purchased as going-concerns.

However there are a number of reasons why it is often difficult to establish a link between formal training and business performance. For example individuals often have different expectations from training, which tends to influence their perceptions of its effectiveness (Antonacopoulou, 2001). Antonacopoulou also suggests that the skills developed may be insufficient to support the continuous learning that has taken place. She further argues that structured training often fails to contribute to the learning process because of the proactive response required to accommodate the rate of change. Whilst the research shows that formal training is likely to be beneficial, the concept that formal training significantly enhances business performance remains arguable, even though paradoxically the majority of training policies and initiatives are based on this principle (Keep & Mayhew, 1996).

The results generated by the OMs interviews revealed informal training often has a significant impact on the firm's performance, particularly where time had been spent working alongside the present owners prior to take-over. Although most of the learning that occurred during this period was experiential learning, a number of OMs also participated in informal training activities. Given that the findings showed that those who had worked alongside the present owners were more likely to sustain trade levels during the take-over period, it is therefore likely that informal training will have an

impact on the performance of the business during this time. The fact that informal training could also be linked to business performance after the firm had been taken over further highlights the potential benefits of this form of training. However it should be noted that these conclusions are based only on the results of the qualitative research as this particular issue was too broad in scope to examine via a postal survey. Whilst the findings clearly indicate that informal training is likely to contribute to the firm's success, additional research may be required before firm conclusions can be drawn. Whilst perceptions of success were often unrelated to the firms financial performance a link could nevertheless be established between the use of informal training activities and factors that are directly related to the financial performance of the business. In this instance the key indicators were trade levels and the volume of new business. It is therefore concluded that whilst the uptake of formal training is unlikely to enhance the performance of the firm in the traditional sense, informal training activities often have a significant influence. Possible reasons for this include the difference in training methods. For example formal training tends to focus on the generic elements of small business management (Curran et al., 1995; Curran & Blackburn, 2000) whilst informal training is targeted towards specific areas (Storey, 1994; Hager, 1998). Informal training is therefore likely to have more impact than formal training, as it is has been designed to address particular needs. Moreover informal training is also situation-specific, thereby ensuring that skills are developed within the environment for which they are intended (Atkinson & Meager, 1994; Hendry et al., 1995).

However, it should be noted that informal training is often difficult to measure because of the broadness of the scope that these activities encompass and the lack of tangibility inherent within the methodologies employed (Hendry et al., 1991; Johnson & Gubbins,

1992). Establishing precisely the type of activities that are most likely to influence the firm's performance could therefore be difficult.

8.9. The Weak Link Between Financial Performance and Perceptions of Success

The previous section goes some way to illustrating how perceptions of success can influence the way OM's may benefit from formal training. However the way success is measured is significant for a number of reasons. For example this factor often influences skill prioritisation where emphasis is placed on the skills that are perceived as being the most important to the firm's success. Consequently performance measures also drive priority areas for skill development. Given that the research aims to determine which skills are particularly important to those who purchase established enterprises, this aspect of the research is clearly significant.

The findings of the OM interviews show that success is frequently measured against the behaviour and attitude of customers. For example if the OM's were able to observe high levels of customer satisfaction, significantly increase the throughput of new customers and retain the existing customers that comprise the firm's goodwill, they considered the firm a success. Although this standpoint strongly supports the argument that customer service is the key driver of business success (Collier, 1994; Anderson & Fornell, 2000; Zahorik et al., 2000; Haber & Reichel, 2005; Ford, 2006) in this instance these particular indicators are also linked to ownership context; the need to retain the customers that comprise the goodwill of the firm applying chiefly to firms that have changed ownership.

However the research also revealed that perceptions of success tend to alter as different phases of ownership are entered. For example whilst the preservation of the firm's

goodwill often acts as a success indicator during the early stages of take-over, it is rarely a key indicator later on. Although customer satisfaction and the ability to attract new business (customers) continue to remain the primary factors, success is more likely to be measured against personal goals and aspirations. Despite the research being able to identify the way purchasers of established enterprises perceive and measure success, the findings also support the results of other studies, which show that success is often measured against personal vision, aspirations and individual objectives (Bird, 1992; Morgan, 1996). Moreover the findings also reflects the argument put forward by Bamberger (1983) who claims that the central role adopted by OMs not only influences the firm's objectives and performance but also perceptions of success. Although a number of researchers argue that the financial health of a business is the key factor in determining whether it is successful (Webb et al., 1999; Jarvis et al., 2000; Hudson et al., 2001) significantly only two of the OMs interviewed measured success against the firm's financial performance and profitability.

In support of the argument put forward by Hynes (1998) it is therefore concluded that whilst the firm's financial performance is important, performance cannot effectively be measured using only the factors that are finance related.

8.10. Key Sources of Learning

Given that the study seeks to identify the knowledge and learning sources that are the most beneficial to those who purchase established enterprises, the findings in regards to this issue are particularly important.

The study showed that there are a number of key learning sources that purchasers of established enterprises frequently exploit. However the richest source of learning came

from working alongside the present owners prior to taking over the business, which evidently enables OM's to gain a significant amount of practical experience within a relatively short space of time. More importantly however is the relevance of what is learnt, as attention is focused on skills and competences that are situation specific. In instances where the purchase of the business includes the inheritance of employees OM's are able to work with these people before they actually take over. Situational learning within this context is therefore particularly beneficial, as the inheritance of staff is often one of the most challenging aspects of purchasing an established enterprise.

The research also showed that purchasers of existing enterprises learn a great deal from accountants, who were the most frequently used single source of advice. The fact that many of the OM's considered these people to be an integral part of the business reflects the findings of other studies, which suggest that accountants are akin to personal business advisors (PBAs) (Nordhaug & Gooderham, 1996; Wilks, 2000; Gooderham et al., 2004). Given that purchasers of established enterprises are also able to learn a great deal from the wider environment of association (in particular staff, relatives outside the business, accountants and bank managers) tends to support the findings of other research, which shows that these relationships often act as channels for entrepreneurial learning (Hines & Thorpe, 1995; Gibb, 1997; Deakins & Freel, 1998; Cope, 2003).

Despite the low uptake of formal training, the research nevertheless suggests that this particular source of learning can be beneficial. Moreover the majority of OM's were also of the opinion that if these programmes were more tailored to small business ownership and avoided the traditional classroom methods of delivery, take-up would be greater, particularly amongst those who are new to small business ownership. This is

supported by the arguments presented by the accountants, who claimed that this type of training should adopt a less formal approach and focus only on the issues that are relevant to small business ownership. However formal training remains extremely limited as a learning vehicle as the selective elements of core issues that it covers tend to be considerably narrower in context than the actual skills required (Curran et al, 1995).

8.11. Situational Learning

Although the research showed that informal training was frequently used to help develop OM skills and competences, most of the learning was experiential. Again this was particularly evident amongst those who had spent time working alongside the present owners, who learnt a great deal from practical experience, observation and trial and error. In addition to the support and guidance provided by the present owners, the OM's also learnt from the discontinuous events that took place during this time. Significantly the research also showed that these particular mechanisms were responsible for the type of learning that is progressive and ongoing; the majority of OM's being of the opinion that they were '*...learning all the time...*' (No.4, p.12). Likewise the accountants also suggested that the most effective way of developing OM skills is on-the-job.

These findings are supportive of the results of other studies, which show that the majority of OM skills are developed through experiential learning and the learning that takes place through discontinuous events (Nicolini & Mesnar, 1995; Hines & Thorpe, 1995; Daudelin, 1996; Kleiner & Roth, 1997; Young & Sexton, 1997; Applebaum & Goransson, 1997; Deakins & Freel, 1998; Sullivan, 2000; Cope & Watts, 2000; Cope, 2003). The fact that it has been shown that engaging in specific forms of learning

encourages people to exploit their learning potential (Hamel & Prahalad, 1993; Chaston et al., 2001), also helps to explain why OM's who work alongside the present owners find this to be a particularly rich source of learning.

Situational learning is also a key contributor to the development of skills post-take over although during the early stages of ownership the learning that takes place tends to be more acute as the OM's no longer have the support of the previous owner. However it is at this time that the benefits are fully realised, as the success of the business at this stage is often dependent on the knowledge and learning that has been acquired whilst working alongside the present owner.

Although inheriting employees can be difficult and challenging, the research showed that OM's can often learn a great deal from these people, particularly during the early stages of ownership. The benefits that are afforded by this particular source of learning reflects the findings of research conducted by Atkinson & Meager (1994), who found that in small firms skills tend to be spread throughout the workforce. Moreover their findings also suggest that small businesses often possess a core of specialist workers who can help to resolve specific problems as and when they occur. For those who purchase established enterprises these core workers tend to be the employees that have been inherited, as these people are in possession of valuable skills and knowledge that can be imparted to the new owners.

Given the various ways that purchasers of established enterprises learn, single and double loop learning clearly play an important part in the development of skills within this ownership context. As single loop learning is essentially an adaptive form of learning, that has the capacity to challenge and therefore modify existing strategies and

assumptions (Argyris & Schon, 1974, 1978; Burgoyne & Hodgson, 1983), this form of learning is particularly important to those who purchase established businesses. Given that the OM's also learned a great deal from unexpected (discontinuous) events suggests that double-loop learning is also a key factor in the development of OM skills. This tends therefore to support the claim that discontinuous events are often the key learning mechanisms for learning in small firms (Deakins & Freel, 1998; Cope & Watts, 2000; Sullivan, 2000) particularly with regards to learning how to manage the business (Cope, 2003).

The research showed that purchasers of established enterprises also undergo the type of learning that is often described as 'transformational' learning (Mezirow, 1990, 1991). Significantly this form of learning was particularly apparent during the early stages of take-over when errors of judgement are most likely to occur. It is therefore concluded that those who purchase established enterprises are able learn a great deal from such incidents, particularly during the early stages of ownership, when they are still familiarising themselves with the business.

Although situational learning is clearly a key facilitator of skill development it should nevertheless be noted that the types of learning that predominate are often strongly influenced by the individuality of the owner and the business (Martin & Staines, 1994; Ayas, 1996). Given also that there is still much to be discovered about the way learning is activated through discontinuous events (Cope, 2001, 2003) further research may be required in order to establish which events/situations are the most likely to act as learning 'triggers' for those who purchase established businesses.

8.12. The Popularity of Accountants and Their Role as Business Advisors

Given that the study sought to identify the knowledge and learning sources that are most beneficial to those who purchase established enterprises, this aspect of the research is of particular interest as it helps to establish how accountants contribute to the overall learning process.

The fact that accountants were the most popular source of advice amongst the sample of OM's supports the findings of a number of other studies. For example research conducted by Atkinson (1994) and Curran & Blackburn (1994) that examined the uptake of small firm support provision showed that accountants were the most frequently used single source of advice. Moreover there is also evidence which shows that accountants are more popular than the personal business advisors (PBAs) that work in conjunction with government support agencies, even though these people provide support in a number of areas (Bennett, 1995; Agar & Moran, 1995; Bryson et al., 1997; Mole, 2002).

However the PBAs that work in association with organisations such as Business Link are often employed as facilitators who inform OM's where specialist advice can be obtained (Bennett, 1995). Bennett also argues that the advice provided by PBAs tends to be generic rather than specialist, even though the building of long-term relationships is actively encouraged in order to promote ongoing development. Although the popularity of accountants, as business advisors, is often attributed to the compulsory elements that are contained within the relationship they have with their clients (Kirby & King, 1997), the research suggests otherwise; the popularity of this particular source of advice being due to the type of relationship accountants develop with their clients. This supports the arguments put forward by Marriott & Marriott, (2000) and Nordhaug

(2000) who claim that the longevity of the association provides enormous potential for the development of intimacy and trust. Moreover it is this particular element that forms the basis of the relational competence that is frequently associated with accountants (Gooderham & Norhaug, 2000) and which leads small firm owners to regard them as an integral part of the business (Gooderham et al., 2004). The fact that the research showed that the quality of the services accountants provide is also a key determinant in establishing their popularity, tends to support the notion that the relationship OMs establish with their accountants is significantly influenced by this factor (Gooderham et al., 2004).

These findings also reflect the arguments put forward by Kvitastein (1997) and Wilks, (2000) who claim that OMs are unlikely to become motivated into adopting and integrating key skills and competences if the business advisor they employ is unable to establish a high degree of relational competence. As the research showed that the popularity of accountants is attributable to factors such as trustworthiness, professionalism and the capacity to impart quality advice, the reason why these professionals are so popular is evident, particularly as small firm owners need to recognise the benefits that can be afforded by establishing this type of relationship (Mole, 2002). These particular attributes also help to explain why purchasers of established enterprises claim that accountants are an excellent source of learning; a factor that has been noted by a number of researchers (O'Farrell & Moffat, 1995; Gibb, 1997).

Although it has been argued that the general advice provided by professionals such as accountants and bank managers is largely incidental and therefore biased towards the use of their private services (Gibb, 2000) the research provided little evidence to

support this claim. However the OM's and accountants suggested that the advice provided by bank managers is geared towards the avoidance/reduction of financial risk which underscores the argument put forward by Mole (2002) who draws attention to the banks need to protect their exposure. By contrast the research showed that the advice and assistance provided by accountants is rarely biased towards financial issues even though the accountants that were interviewed remarked on the importance of being able to manage the firm's finances. The notion that the advice provided by accountants carries the same (potential) disadvantage as the advice provided by bank managers is therefore arguable.

8.13. Business Advisors and Mentoring

As the research seeks to determine the type of support that would be most beneficial to those who purchase established businesses, the role of mentors and PBAs is therefore important.

Although many of the OM's evidently perceive (and use) their accountants as personal business advisors, a significant number of interviewees were nevertheless in favour mentoring. These findings are supportive of research conducted by Greenwood et al., (2002), CEML, (2002) and Stavrou, (2003) who found that mentors are becoming increasingly popular amongst small business owners. Clearly there are a number of benefits that can be afforded by this type of support and guidance. For example in addition to providing general business advice and assistance, mentors also become actively involved with the business and help OM's identify areas where training is needed (Craig, 1996). Moreover mentors are able to examine ways of implementing strategies that encourage the development of managerial competence. In Norway accountants often adopt this role; their increasing popularity amongst small firm

owners having spawned them into creating multidisciplinary practices that offer a wide range of services over and above those that are finance related (Craig 1996; Greenwood et al., 2002). These particular findings help to explain why purchasers of established businesses frequently perceive their accountants as personal business advisors.

The fact that research also shows that small business owners find this type of support particularly beneficial, (Bennett & Robson, 1999a; Deakins et al., 2001; Gooderham et al., 2004) suggests that purchasers of established enterprises could also benefit from mentoring, particularly as a significant number of people who purchase these businesses are (1) new to small firm ownership and (2) averse to classroom based learning.

However in order to be effective, mentors need to develop a high degree of relational competence, otherwise OMs are unlikely to accept the advice offered (Wilks, 2000; Gooderham et al, 2004). Given that the OMs were of the opinion that mentoring could only be effective if it involved somebody they '*...liked and trusted...*' this particular point is therefore important.

8.14. The Creation of Flexible Learning Strategies

Whilst the research was able to identify the learning sources that purchasers of established enterprises are most likely to exploit, it also provides insight into the factors that often inhibit the take-up of formal training and consequently influence attitudes towards this particular form of learning. Table 8.2 provides a summary of these findings including the methods of learning that are the most preferred. These issues are clearly important as the research aims to identify the learning sources that are the most beneficial to purchasers of established enterprises, and incorporate them into a

framework that will assist skill development and ongoing learning. As the research also aims to determine whether specialised training and support is required, these findings also help to establish how these facilities might best be delivered.

The research revealed that the take-up of formal training is significantly influenced by the timeliness of the programme, as those who purchase established enterprises evidently need to learn as much as possible before they take over the business. The significance of this particular factor tends to reflect the arguments presented by Perren et al., (1999) and PIU, (2001) who claim that the timeliness of training is often crucial.

<u>OMs Prefer</u>	<u>OMs Reject</u>	<u>OMs are Burdened By</u>
Informal training strategies and experiential learning	Formal training programmes that are over-theoretical and/or contain material that is irrelevant	Time constraints A limited choice of training
One-to-one contact	Government sponsored training initiatives that are generic in nature	Exclusion from the majority of government sponsored schemes
Networking/interacting with other small business purchasers	Classroom situations	Training and/or support provision that is inappropriate
To receive advice and assistance from people they know and trust (accountants etc.)	Programme/course leaders who are unable to empathise with the reality of small business ownership	A lack of support/training facilities that are able to accommodate the needs of those who purchase established enterprises
Immediate solutions to problems	Competence based training namely NVQs, that are often difficult to understand and/or are irrelevant	
OM training that is relevant		
Fast track OM training activities that will enable them to learn a great deal relatively quickly		
PBAs/mentors who are able to adopt a supportive role and become actively involved with the business		

Table 8.2. The preferences, dislikes and burdens that influence the way purchasers of established enterprises learn.

Training programmes that aim to assist those who purchase established enterprises should therefore take place before ownership is established. Moreover such programmes should also look to encourage prospective purchasers who may also benefit from training taken at this time. Given that classroom situations were generally disfavoured by the OM's questioned and that this type of programme is often too generic to accommodate the needs of those who purchase established businesses, a

strong argument is therefore provided for the introduction of training programmes that are less structured and more interactive, as this will provide OM's with the opportunity to discuss issues that are context specific.

However as the research shows that those who purchase established enterprises learn the majority of their skills through informal training and experiential learning, training providers may therefore need to pay more attention to these particular sources of learning and how they might best be exploited.

8.15. Construction of the Framework

One of the main objectives of the study was to produce a framework that can be used for creating strategies that actively encourage skill development and ongoing learning amongst those who purchase established enterprises. Figure 8.1 is therefore based on the findings of the research; in particular the results produced by the OM and Accountants interviews.

As the findings showed that those who take over established businesses are more likely to adopt an informal approach to learning and training, the framework is strongly

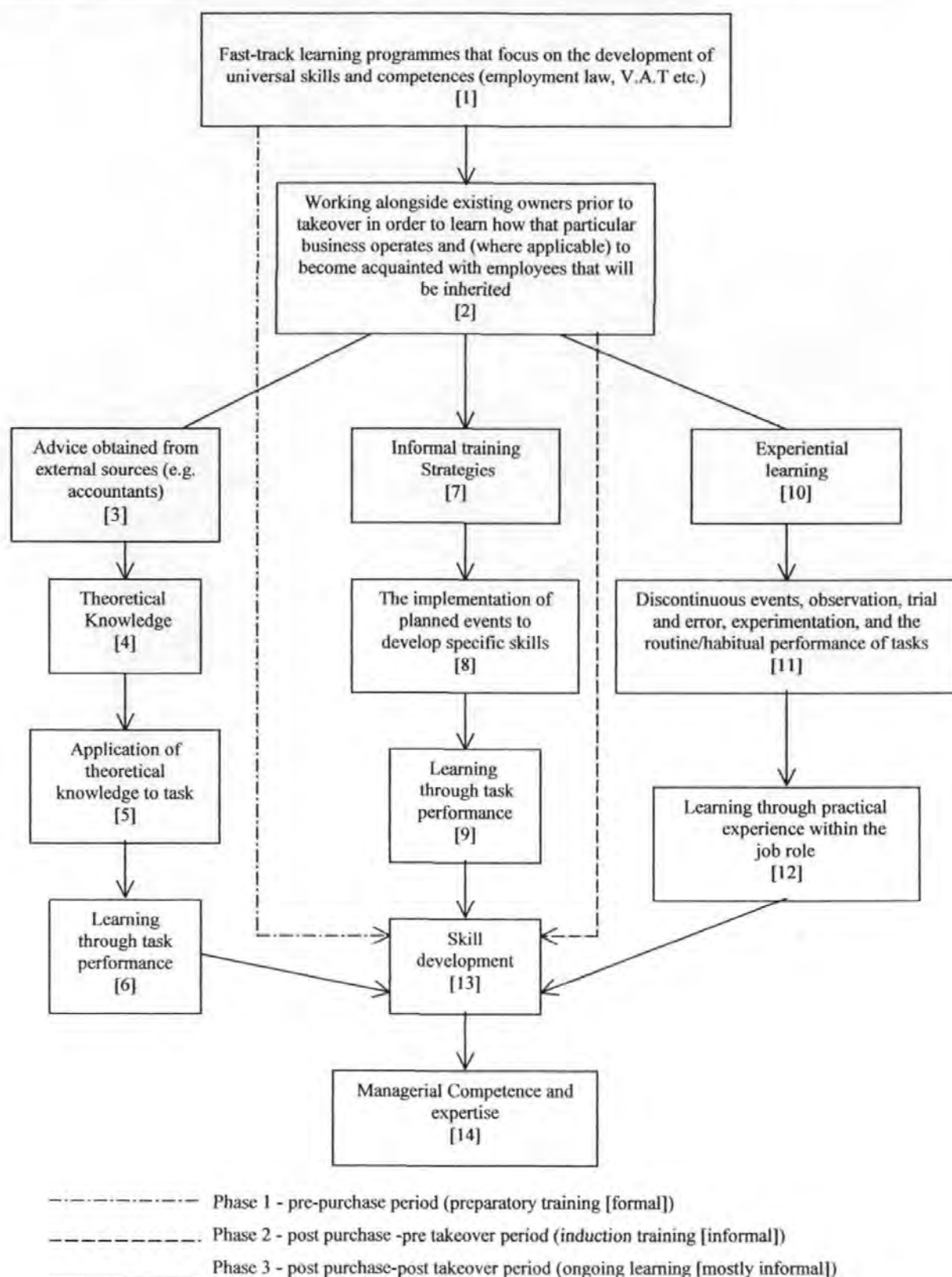


Figure 8.1. A Framework for the creation of strategies that encourage skill development and ongoing learning

geared towards informal training activities and experiential learning. However as the research suggested that formal training should be available to those who purchase going

concerns the framework shows how this can be used in conjunction with informal (induction) training to help facilitate a smooth take-over.

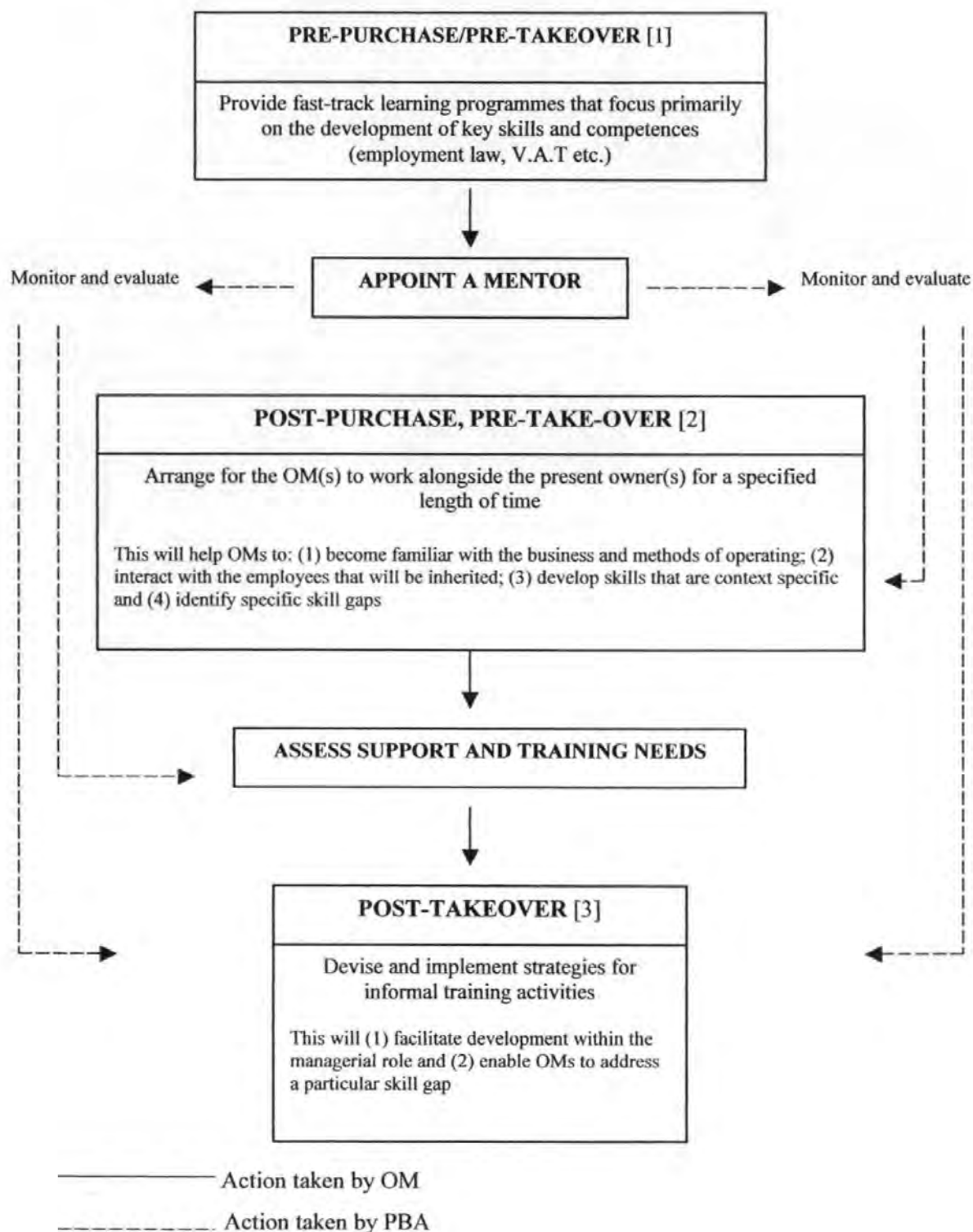


Figure 8.2. Specialist Support for Small Business Purchasers: An Interactive Framework for the development of OM skills and Competences

To assist those who provide support and assistance to small firms a second framework has been constructed (Figure 8.2) which can be use to create OM training and learning plans. As the research showed that a large number of OMs were in favour of using PBAs/mentors, this particular framework also shows how this form of support might be used in conjunction with other learning mechanisms.

8.16. The Structure of the Framework (Figure 8.1, Boxes 1 – 14)

Based on four key learning mechanisms (formal training, informal training, external sources of advice and experiential learning) the framework comprises of 14 separate elements, the majority of which are inter-related. The framework is a top-down structure beginning with the pre-purchase/takeover phase.

The first element (Box 1) concerns fast-track formal training, which ideally needs to take place before the business is actually taken over. The need for this particular form of training is based on the results generated by the OM and accountants interviews, which showed that those who purchase going-concerns need to learn as much as possible before ownership is established. Such training will therefore help promote a smooth takeover, and enable OMs to gain insight into the skills and competences required for successful small business ownership within this context (Boxes 13 and 14)

The second element (Box 2) is based on the findings of the OM interviews, which showed that the time spent working alongside the present owners is the richest source of learning available to purchasers of established enterprises. This is because OMs (1) are able to 'get the feel' of business before they actually takeover and (2) are provided with access to a variety of learning events each of which promotes the development of OM skills and competences (Boxes 13 and 14). Although the learning activities may

differ from business to business, the learning mechanisms are nevertheless the same. This multi-method context-specific form of learning therefore enables OM's to exploit a wide range of learning situations.

Table 8.3 highlights the main benefits that may be afforded by working alongside the present owners whilst Figure 8.3 illustrates the multi-method context specific learning process

It familiarises new/prospective owners with the business through hands-on practical experience
It allows new/prospective owners to gain insight into the specific skills and abilities required to run the business
It heightens the new/prospective owners awareness of the firms methods of working, which will help to facilitate a smooth take-over.
It places the new/prospective owners in an ideal position for asking questions and discussing problems as and when the need arises
It provides new/prospective owners with an opportunity to learn from observation
It helps to break down the barriers between new/prospective owners and the staff they will inherit, which will enable them to gain acceptance and avoid many of the problems that are associated with resistance to change.
It will help increase the self-confidence of the new/prospective owners; this being one of the 'unpredictable' outcomes that is often associated with this particular type of learning (Antonacopoulou, 1999)

Table 8.3. The key benefits afforded by working alongside the present owners ('induction training')

Whilst the results generated by the survey showed that accountants are the most frequently used source of advice, the findings of the OM and accountants' interviews also showed that accountants are an excellent source of learning (Box 3.), as they provide OM's with theoretical knowledge (Box4.) that can be applied to specific tasks and situations within the workplace (Box 5). Through practical application OM's are therefore able to gain competence within the area(s) specified (Box 6) thus increasing their overall ability as owner-managers (Boxes 13 and 14).

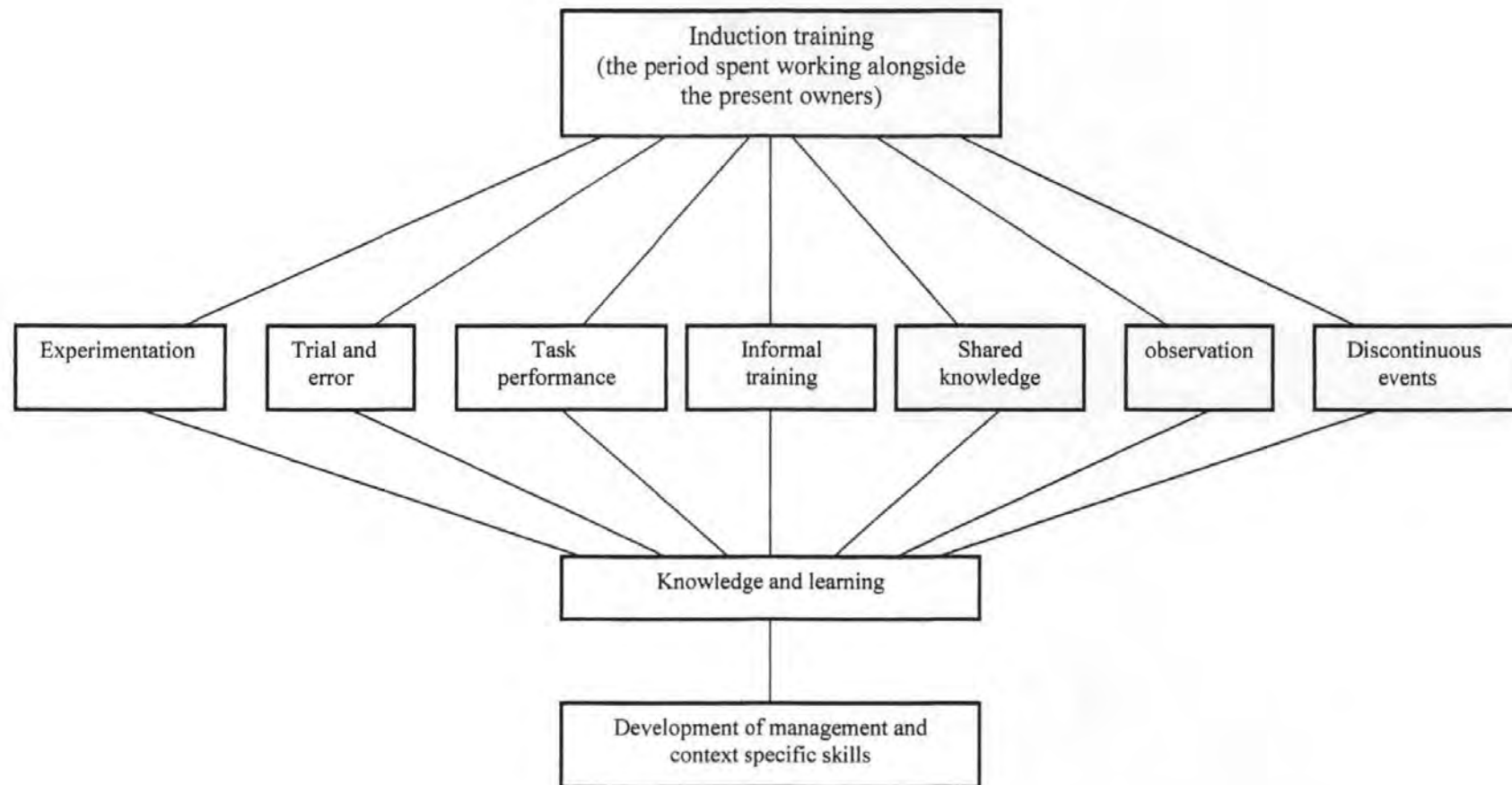


Figure 8.3. The key learning events that comprise the 'multi-method context specific' form of learning that occurs during the period spent working alongside the present owners.

Given that the OM and accountants interviews' also showed that informal training often plays a key role in the development of OM skills and competences, this particular source of learning also forms an integral part of the framework (Box 7). As this form of training comprises planned events (Box 8) that have been designed to address specific skill gaps, performing the task(s) concerned (Box 9.) enables OMs to raise their skill levels in a particular area (Box 13). Consequently their overall competence as managers is significantly increased (Box 14).

In addition to the roles played by formal and informal training the framework also acknowledges the significance of experiential learning (Box 10) and the impact it has on the development of OM skills and competencies. This part of the framework is based on the results generated by the OM and accountants interviews, which show that the majority of OM skills are developed through practical experience within the workplace (Box 11). However unlike the learning that takes place through planned activities (i.e. informal/formal training) experiential learning is unplanned and continuous. This particular learning process therefore forms an essential element of the framework, as it is the main facilitator of ongoing/progressive learning (Box 12). Because the majority of OM skills are developed in this way (Box 13), experiential learning therefore plays a major role in the development of managerial competence and expertise (Box 14).

Although training does not always result in learning (Antonacopoulou, 2001) the research shows that the appropriate training (i.e. training that contains material that is relevant and is delivered in a manner that is generally acceptable to small business owners) generally has a positive effect on the development of skills and competences. For example the findings generated by the questionnaire showed that formal training is

often extremely beneficial to those who purchase small going-concerns. Similarly the OM and accountants interviews revealed that informal training is a key facilitator of skill development within this ownership context Boxes 6, 9, and 12 are therefore based on this evidence. Box 13 is based on the findings of the OM and accountants interviews which show how training (formal and informal), the advice provided by others and experiential learning contribute to the development of OM skills and competences. Given that the OM and accountants interviews also showed how these four key factors enable OMs to increase their ability as managers, Box 14 is therefore based on the results generated by this phase of the research.

Although the framework clearly demonstrates how various learning mechanisms can be integrated to form a specific learning plan, the flexible nature of the framework enables OMs to design and implement individual strategies that are best suited to their learning needs.

8.17. An Interactive Framework to Assist Support Providers

The second framework (Figure 8.2) that has been constructed to assist support and training providers also recognises the potential benefits of training programmes that take place during the pre-purchase/takeover phase (Box 1) and the multi-method, context-specific form of learning that is associated with working alongside the present owners (Box 2). However whilst the main framework (Figure 8.1) focuses on self-development, this framework is concerned with assisted development via outsider support and assistance. The role of mentors is therefore a key element, as these people are not only able to offer practical support and guidance but also constructive advice in regards to training needs (CEML, 2002). Typically this includes strategies for the implementation of informal training activities that will help OMs address specific skill

gaps and shortfalls (Box 3). Given that one of the main functions of mentors is to monitor and evaluate progress (CEML, 2002) OMs will therefore be able to receive feedback on the effectiveness of their training activities.

However it should be noted that whilst this particular framework is quite specific is has nevertheless been designed to act merely as a guidance tool for support and training providers. The actual strategies that OMs adopt will therefore be based on their personal choice.

The following chapter discusses the conclusions, the limitations of the study and the areas where further research is required. The chapter also discusses how the research contributes to the existing body of knowledge on small firms how the study may is of particular value to individuals who purchase established enterprises, policy makers, support providers and other researchers.

CHAPTER 9

Summary, Conclusions and Further Research

9.1. Summary of the Research

The research programme reported here sought to establish the support and training needs of individuals that purchase established enterprises and how these needs might best be supported. To fulfil these aims a number of specific research objectives were set (Table 9.1), which are also encompassed in the research propositions (Table, 9.2). The overall results show that the research objectives were fulfilled notwithstanding the limitations of the study, which highlight the areas in need of further research.

1. To discover which skills and competences are perceived as being the most important to those taking over established businesses and to determine whether it is possible to identify any skills that are particularly important to this sub-sector.
2. To identify the sources that are used to develop skills and competences and establish which sources are the most beneficial.
3. To determine whether it would assist OM's if specialized training programmes and support facilities were introduced and how these might best be delivered if such a need were established.
4. To determine how OM's taking over established enterprises may formulate strategies for continuous learning and development. This will be presented in the form of a framework that can be used to create individual learning plans

Table 9.1. Research Objectives

The research was able to identify the skills and competences that are the most important to those who take over established enterprises and ascertain which sources of learning that are the key contributors to OM skill development. Although skill prioritisation is not significantly influenced by business type it is nevertheless linked to ownership

context; particular emphasis being placed on the development of people skills. For example the ability to build good customer relations and manage the business generally are directly linked to the fact that the business was purchased as a going-concern: these skills being perceived as the key to (1) sustaining levels of trade and (2) preserving the firms goodwill. Similarly the emphasis placed on the ability to manage staff is also linked to ownership context: this skill being particularly important to those who have inherited employees.

- Proposition 1:** Particular support is required for those who take over/purchase established enterprises
- Proposition 2:** The skill priorities of those purchasing established enterprises will be influenced by business type.
- Proposition 3:** The skill priorities of those taking over established businesses will be significantly influenced by the fact that the business was purchased as a going-concern
- Proposition 4:** The Skill Priorities of experienced OMs will differ from those who are relatively new to small firm ownership (experienced being defined as having owned a business before and/or where the OM in question had been operating their current business for more than two years)
- Proposition 5:** Preferred methods of training will be influenced by the fact that the business was purchased as a going-concern

Table 9.2. Research Propositions

The research also identified a need for support and training that is able to accommodate the needs of those who purchase established enterprises; the facilities that are currently available being unsuitable and/or inappropriate. However whilst the provision of such facilities would clearly be beneficial, the majority of skills are developed through informal training and experiential learning; in particular working alongside the present owners prior to taking over the business. Significantly the study revealed that purchasers of established businesses are likely to benefit from formal training, although if it is to be effective there needs to be a significant shift in the way such programmes

are delivered. Although no link could be established between preferred methods of training and ownership context, purchasers of established enterprises are likely to require fast-track training programmes that will enable them to learn a great deal within a relatively short space of time.

The study also showed that accountants are not only the most frequently used single source of advice but also a rich source of learning; the information and advice they provide contributing significantly to the OM's knowledge base. By contrast public sector support has very little to offer those who purchase established enterprises, as the majority of facilities are geared towards new businesses.

From the findings of the research it was possible to construct two frameworks that can be used to help purchasers of established enterprises develop the appropriate skills and competences. Given that the frameworks' offer a wide degree of latitude, learning plans can be formulated to accommodate particular needs and preferences. OM's are therefore provided with the opportunity to select the strategy that best suits their particular way of learning. This is an important consideration as the research shows that whilst purchasers of established enterprises have specific needs, they are also heterogeneous.

9.2. Restrictions and Limitations Within the Research

Although the study was able to fulfil the research objectives, there are nevertheless several areas where the research is limited. The following section therefore examines these shortfalls and the limitations they impose on the overall scope of the study.

9.2.i. The Bias Imposed by Geographical Location

because the geographical location in which the study took place is highly geared towards tourism, this particular industry is over-represented. Clearly this affects the generalisability of the results (Table 10), which therefore apply only to this report. Moreover the study comprises just three types of industry, tourism, retail services and professional services. Given that none of the OM's who participated in the research were involved with manufacturing, agriculture, engineering or IT, the scope of the research with regards to the types of industries involved is therefore limited.

i) <i>Selection</i>	Findings being specific to the groups study
ii) <i>Setting</i>	Findings being specific to, dependent on, the particular context in which the study took place
ii) <i>History</i>	Specific and unique historical experiences may determine or affect the affect the findings
iv) <i>Construct Effects</i>	The particular constructs studied may be specific to the group studied
(Source: LeCompte & Goetz, 1982)	

Table 9.3. Threats to external validity

9.2.ii. Gender Bias

One of the main limitations of the study is a lack of information regarding the influence of gender. Although the majority of OM's who participated in the research owned the firm jointly with a spouse, it could not be established which partner, if any, had the most control of the business. It was therefore impossible to identify any patterns and/or trends that may be attributable to this particular variable. However attempting to obtain this type of information via a postal questionnaire would have been difficult as the subject is too sensitive and complex to explore via quantitative methods (Cope, 2005). Given also that the interviewees' who owned their business jointly provided little

evidence that one partner was more dominant than the other, the subject was not broached.

9.2.iii. Interview Bias

Even though great care was taken to avoid interviewer bias, the possibility that leading questions may occasionally have crept into the interview cannot be ignored. However the type of bias that can arise from having preconceived ideas and opinions of the type of people being interviewed is negligible, as OM's of small firms are not amongst the social groups (e.g. those from the criminal fraternity) that are likely to provoke fixed judgments and/or extreme prejudice (Borg, 1981).

9.2.iv. The Sample Size (quantitative research)

Although the sample size ($n=350$) was determined through the appropriate methods, the questions pertaining to skill prioritisation for successful small business ownership (Q.22i, questionnaire # 2), OM's perceptions of their personal skill levels (Q.22ii, Questionnaire #2) and skill prioritisation for inclusion on OM training programmes, (Q. Questionnaire #1) applied to just half of this number ($n=175$) as they appeared on different questionnaires. The sample size used for these particular questions and the subsequent analyses, therefore fall outside the recommended population-sample ratio (Neuman, 1994). Consequently the results generated by the tests performed on these particular variables cannot be generalised to the whole population (population referring to as all the cases) (Robson, 1993). Although these issues were examined further during the follow-up interviews (Phase 2 of the research), the lack of generalisability with regards to the quantitative phase of the study cannot be ignored.

9.2.v. Tests of Significance

Although it was necessary to perform various statistical tests on the quantitative data (namely Chi-Square, MANOVA & ANOVA), the value of using these tests could be brought into question, as the results are often misleading (Barlow et al., 1984). The majority of problems occur where the results have shown that there are statistically significant differences between the groups tested. This is because the statistical significance may be totally unrelated to the size and/or importance of the effect (Meehl, 1978). Paradoxically where large samples are used the problem can be even more acute as the sensitivity of the test is increases along with the size of the sample. A large sample is therefore more likely to produce a statistically significant result. As there will always be some differences between the conditions tested, these results clearly need to be treated with caution, as they may not be entirely accurate. Accepting that the tests performed here rarely produced results that were statistically significant, this point cannot be ignored, as the outcomes could have been very different. Given also that contrasting results might be produced if the study is replicated, the potential weakness of these tests needs to be acknowledged, as the validity and reliability of the research could be affected adversely (Pallant, 2001). Although Meehl (1978) suggests using small samples in order to ensure that only robust effects are picked up, this was not an option here.

9.2.vi. Key Learning Events and Activities

Although the study was able to determine that informal training frequently takes place amongst those who purchase established enterprises, the scope of the research did not extend to the identification of specific activities. It was therefore impossible to determine (1) the type of activities that take place most frequently and (2) which activities are the most beneficial.

Similarly whilst the research showed that working alongside the present owners is the richest source of learning available to those who purchase going-concerns, identifying which events/activities are the most beneficial was beyond the scope of the research.

9.2.vii. The Inheritance of Staff

Although difficulties concerning the inheritance of staff rarely lasted for a significant length of time, this particular issue clearly has the potential to create serious problems for those who purchase established enterprises. Whilst the research provides an indication of how OM's can initially gain the acceptance of employees, the precise nature of any recurring/ongoing problems could not be determined as this was beyond the scope of the research.

9.2.viii. Working Alongside Family Members

Significantly the survey showed that very few respondents were concerned with the effective management of family members of staff. Given also that the OM interviews failed to evoke any comment concerning family members who were directly involved with the business, it is therefore concluded that the majority of OM's were not involved with family-owned businesses. Consequently it could not be determined whether the skills, competences and support needs of those who purchase going-concerns is influenced by the factor.

9.2.ix. The Impact of Formal Training

Although the results generated by the survey indicate that formal training has little influence on the firm's success, the findings of the OM interviews suggest that is often difficult to determine the payback from training because success is rarely measured against firm's financial performance. Tests conducted to establish whether the uptake

of training was linked to increases in sales levels (which would provide an indication of the way the firm is performing financially) could therefore be misleading, as the payback from training is more likely to be measured against improvements in the skills that OM's perceive as being the key drivers for business success. Consequently this aspect of the research is limited, as it could not be established whether the take-up of formal training has an impact on the skill levels within these areas.

9.3. Areas for Further Research

9.3.i. Introduction

The limitations of the study clearly provide an indication of the areas where further research is required. The following section examines issues that are of particular interest including several that are non-proposition related.

9.3.ii. Geographical Location

Given that tourism is over-represented the study therefore needs to be replicated in an area that is not dominated by this particular industry. Moreover the sample should also comprise a wider range of industries in order to provide a more realistic insight into the impact of business type on factors such as skill prioritisation; support needs and preferred methods of training.

9.3.iii. Informal Training and Learning Activities

Given that the research produced limited information with regards to (1) the type of informal activities that take place the most frequently and (2) which activities are the most beneficial, further research is required that focuses on these particular issues. Similarly whilst the research showed that the time spent working alongside the present

owners was the richest source of learning, it did not establish which of the activities that take place during this period are the main catalysts for learning. Additional research is therefore required in order to identify the learning events that are the most beneficial/effective. Given that informal training often played a significant role during this time, such research should also seek to establish (1) the type of informal training activities that take place and (2) the particular benefits that are afforded by this type of activity.

9.3.iv. The Impact of Formal Training

The research clearly showed that the OM's perceptions of success made it difficult to determine whether the take-up of formal training contributes to the firm's success, as the majority of those who participated in the research measured success against factors that were unrelated to the financial performance of the firm. Further research is therefore in order to establish (1) whether OM's assess the benefits of formal training against increases in skills levels in the areas they perceive as being the key drivers for business success and (2) the payback from formal training when the benefits are measured in this particular way.

9.3.v. Inheriting Staff

Given that the research was unable to examine in detail the problems associated with inheriting staff, further research is required in order to identify the precise nature of the difficulties OM's face and the impact such problems are likely to have on the firm. By gaining insight into the difficulties that are commonly associated with the inheritance of employees, strategies can be devised that will help prevent/resolve these particular problems. Moreover given that legislation often makes it difficult to dismiss employees

(ACAS, 2006; DTI, 2006) ways clearly need to be found that will encourage OM's to build satisfactory working relationships with the employees they inherit.

9.3.vi. Family Businesses

The low priority given to the ability to manage family members of staff and the lack of reference to this issue during the OM interviews suggests that very few of the OM's sampled were involved with family-owned businesses. However given that research shows that family-owned businesses are likely to experience problems that rarely effect non-family owned firms (McConaughy, 2001) this particular issue is clearly important. Further research is therefore required in order to determine whether this type of 'family purchase' influences factors such as skill prioritisation, support needs and the approach to small firm ownership within this particular ownership context.

9.3.vii. Validation of the Learning Framework

Although it has been possible to construct a framework that is based on the training and learning strategies that are the most beneficial to those taking over established businesses, it was not possible to evaluate its effectiveness. Further research is therefore required in order to validate the framework and assess its overall impact on the development of OM skills.

9.3.viii. The Need for Longitudinal/Qualitative Research

Although the research conducted here provides insight into the skills and competences required to successfully take over and manage an established business, there may be a number of problems associated with small firm ownership within this context that have yet to be identified. Further qualitative research is therefore required to help pinpoint the type of difficulties these OM's are likely to face. To determine when such problems

are likely to occur and which situations/events are likely to present the most problems a longitudinal study should be conducted that monitors a number of individuals who have purchased established enterprises. The sample should ideally, be heterogeneous and include experienced OMs and individuals who are new to small firm ownership. Through methods such as diary keeping, interviews and focus groups the progress of participants should be recorded over a period of time, beginning from when the business is actually taken over.

9.4. How the Research Contributes to the Existing Body of Knowledge

Although there is a great deal of scope for further research, the study clearly shows that small firms that are purchased as going concerns are an important sub-group of the small business fraternity. The findings also draw attention to the importance of ownership context and how researchers could benefit from disaggregating samples in this way. This also applies to studies that focus on established businesses, as there are a number of differences between founder-member owned firms and firms that have changed owners through sale and purchase. Moreover these differences significantly influence a number of factors, methods of learning, support needs and training requirements. For example the research revealed that those who purchase going-concerns would benefit from fast -track training programmes that are designed to take place before the business is actually taken over. However one of the most significant contributions to the literature concerns skill prioritisation. For example the research clearly showed that the ability to build customer relations, the ability to manage the business generally and the ability manage staff are particularly important to those who purchase established enterprises. This is because maintaining trade levels, preserving the firms goodwill and building effective working relationships with employees that

have been inherited are the key drivers for successful small business owner-management within this context.

Evidence was also produced which shows that spending time working alongside the present owners is particularly beneficial, as the OMs are able to engage in different forms of learning from within the working environment. Significantly this 'multi-method context -specific' type of learning is likely to occur only in the circumstances described above, which make it unique to firms that are purchased (or acquired) as going concerns. Although it could be argued that this particular form of learning is also likely to play a major role in firms that have experienced changes through leadership succession, the circumstances surrounding leadership succession are different from the circumstances surrounding a change of ownership through sale and purchase. Consequently the approach to learning will also differ, particularly as the successor is likely to be an experienced member of staff who is experienced and/or familiar with the business.

Given the uniqueness of firms that are purchased as established enterprises and the various factors that segregate them from other small businesses, there is clearly much to discover in regards to small firm ownership within this context. Whilst the research contributes significantly to the existing body of knowledge it also demonstrates the importance of disaggregating ownership context. It is therefore envisaged the report will not only help create an impetus for further studies but also broaden the scope of small business research generally.

9.5. The Value of the Research

In addition to the contribution made to the existing body of knowledge, there are aspects of the research that will also be of value to policy makers, support providers, small firm owners and other researchers.

For example the Literature Review (Chapters 2 and 3) highlight (1) the lack of research into small firms that were purchased as going concerns (2) the failure of researchers to disaggregate ownership context. This aspect of the study could therefore be valuable to other small business researchers, particularly where sampling frames are likely to contain a mix of ownership contexts. Given that the review also shows that research conducted into established fails to make a distinction between businesses that are owned by the founder member and businesses that have undergone a change of owner(s), this observation could be of particular value to researchers who focus on this subgroup.

Clearly the methods of data collection employed in this study (Chapter 4) have been selected to accommodate the research questions posed. However the research design namely the collating of quantitative data for the purpose of surfacing issues that require investigation through qualitative techniques could be useful to researchers who are looking to pinpoint specific areas in their research that need to be examined in detail. Although researchers frequently use a combination of methods, there is nevertheless a tendency to use qualitative research techniques as a means of surfacing issues that will form the basis of quantitative investigation (e.g White, 1999).

Given that the results generated by (the postal survey) (Chapter 5) identifies (1) the most frequently used sources of advice and (2) the skills that are important to those

who purchase established enterprises this aspect of the research will be of particular value to academics, policy makers and support agencies/providers. As this phase of the research also identifies a need for training that will assist purchasers of established firms, policy makers and support providers are therefore made aware of this need. However the findings generated by this phase of the study could be of particular value to researchers who focus on support provision and the development of OM skills/competences, as it provides valuable information concerning this particular sub-sector of the small business fraternity.

The results produced by Phases 2 and 3 of the research (Chapters 6 and 7) will also be of value to the above parties, as the information is broader in scope. Policy makers, training providers are therefore able to gain insight into the key areas where support and training is needed and moreover how this might best be delivered. Given that these phases of the research identify the issues that tend to give small business purchasers the most cause for concern, policy makers and training providers will be aware of the areas where support and assistance is most needed. This information can therefore be used to help formulate future policies for small firm support and training provision.

Discussion of the results (Chapter 8) tends to underscore the above points particularly with regards to the uptake of support and training provision; preferred methods of training and the employment of informal training/learning activities. However this aspect of the research will be of particular value to policy makers and support providers as it provides further evidence which suggests that more emphasis should be placed on exploiting the informal methods of learning and skill development that small firm OMs frequently employ (Curran et al., 1995 + Doyle & Hughes, 2004).

The main framework (Figure 9.1) that has been constructed to help formulate plans for skill development and ongoing learning will clearly be of value to policy makers, support providers, researchers and small firm owners. With regards to policy makers and support providers, the flexibility of the framework suggests that it may be incorporated into existing training/learning strategies or alternatively act as a guide for the creation of new concepts. However this particular framework could also prove invaluable to OM's who are interested in self-development and/or those who prefer to be responsible for their own training/learning. The second framework (Figure 9.2), which has been constructed to assist support providers/agencies, can be used in a similar way. It could therefore (1) be used as sounding board for the creation of new approaches to OM skill development and/or (2) be integrated into existing strategies/policies for OM skill development. This particular framework could also assist PBAs and mentors who are looking for ways to promote skill development and ongoing learning amongst their clients (i.e. small business owners). By contrast the third framework (Figure 9.3) which describes the learning process that takes place when purchasers of established enterprises spend time working alongside the present owner(s) prior to take-over will be of particular value to small business researchers as it introduces them to a new dimension of OM learning.

The conclusions drawn from the research findings (Chapter 8) will also be of value to small business researchers as the results can be compared with the findings generated by their own research. Moreover the areas highlighted for further research can be used to spawn new studies, thus providing researchers with the opportunity to explore these issues in greater detail.

OWNER-MANAGER QUESTIONNAIRE



Dear Sir/Madam,

I am currently at Plymouth University conducting research for my Doctoral thesis. As the aim of the study is to obtain information pertaining to the every-day running of small purchased businesses, YOUR contribution would be very much appreciated. The following questionnaire has therefore been designed to obtain a wide range of information, without taking too much of your time. (20 minutes maximum!)

Please answer all the questions that apply to YOU as I need to know as much as possible about yourself and your business.

NOTES

- Please return your questionnaire by - there is an S.A.E. provided for your convenience.
- **NB** when a question asks for details concerning the '**CO-OWNER**' of your business, this refers to anybody with whom you jointly own and manage the firm, including, (if applicable) your spouse.
- If you have any queries concerning either the questionnaire or the project itself then please do not hesitate to contact me on the following telephone number:- (01803) 215202

Thanking you in advance for your assistance and co-operation, I look forward to receiving your completed questionnaire shortly.

Yours faithfully

Jane Perry MSc

THE SURVEY

COMPANY CHARACTERISTICS - THESE QUESTIONS ARE CONCERNED WITH FINDING OUT ABOUT THE NATURE OF YOUR COMPANY

1) Type of Business (please tick one of the following)

Retail Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Professional Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tourism	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Manufacturing	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> _____				

2) How long have you owned your current business (please tick one of the following)

0 - 12 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	31 - 36 months	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 - 18 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	37 months - 5 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
19 - 24 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 - 10 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
25 - 30 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	over 10 years	<input type="checkbox"/>

3) Where was it purchased (please tick one of the following)

Estate agents	<input type="checkbox"/>	Private sale	<input type="checkbox"/>
Auction	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify [_____])	

4) Ownership of the Business (please tick one of the following)

self only	<input type="checkbox"/>	self & partner (husband/wife etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self & business partner	<input type="checkbox"/>	Self and business partners	
		(please state how many partners [_____])	

5) Number of employees (EXCLUDING partners)

None	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 - 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6 - 10	<input type="checkbox"/>	11 - 20	<input type="checkbox"/>	21 - 30	<input type="checkbox"/>
30+	<input type="checkbox"/>								

6) Is this the first business you have owned (please delete as appropriate)

Yes/No (If 'Yes', please go on to QUESTION 8)

7) If 'No' was your other business:

a) Purchased as a going-concern	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) Started from scratch	<input type="checkbox"/>
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8) What was your occupation immediately prior to purchasing your (current) business (please tick one of the following)

	<u>Self</u>	<u>Co-owner</u>
Full-time employment (within the same industry as your current business)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

continued overleaf

**Full-time employment
(Within an industry NOT
the same as your current
business)**

☐

☐

Part-time employment

☐

☐

Full-time education

☐

☐

Part-time education

☐

☐

Unemployed

☐

☐

Voluntary work

☐

☐

Self-employed

☐

☐

Other (please specify)

9) Reasons for purchasing your current business (please tick one box)

Identification of a good business opportunity

☐

**Desire to control own future/a need for
Independence**

☐

No alternative employment

☐

**Fulfilling an ambition to
'Be Your Own Boss'**

☐

Dissatisfied with previous employment/situation

☐

**Early retirement/redundancy
suggested self employment
to be a good option**

☐

**Age (i.e. at 45+ one may be
considered 'too old' by
prospective employers**

☐

**Poor health/limited mobility
(thus making it difficult to
obtain gainful employment
elsewhere)**

☐

continued overleaf

Personal circumstances
(e.g. a lack of formal
qualifications/experience etc.)

[]

Other (please specify) [_____]

PERSONAL DETAILS

10) Age (please tick the appropriate box)

Self 16 - 25 []
 26 - 35 []
 36 - 45 []
 46 - 55 []
 56 - 65 []
 65+ []

Co-owner 16 - 25 []
 26 - 35 []
 36 - 45 []
 46 - 55 []
 56 - 65 []
 65+ []

11) Gender (please delete as appropriate)

Self MALE/FEMALE

Co-owner MALE/FEMALE

12) Education & Qualifications (please tick highest level of attainment)

	<u>Self</u>	<u>Co - owner</u>
none	[]	[]
GCSE(s)	[]	[]
A' Levels	[]	[]
Degree / Diploma	[]	[]
HND/HNC	[]	[]
NVQ	[]	[]
Professional qualification	[]	[]
MBA	[]	[]
Other (please specify)	[_____]	[_____]

TRAINING

13) Have you or your firms co-owner undertaken any training in conjunction with purchasing your business (please delete as appropriate)

YES/NO (If '**NO**' please go on to **QUESTION 21**)

14) If 'YES' who took this training (please tick appropriate box)

Self only ☐

Co-owner ☐

Self and Co-owner ☐

15) Was this training: (please tick the appropriate box)

Technical (e.g. hairdressing, plumbing,) ☐

Managerial (i.e. that which focuses on the skills required to manage a business) ☐

Both managerial and technical
(taken as separate courses) ☐

16) What type of training was this (please tick the appropriate box)

GCSE ☐

A' Levels ☐

HND/HNC /City & Guilds ☐

Degree/Diploma ☐

NVQ ☐

Other (please specify)

17) What form did this training take (please tick the appropriate box)

Seminar ☐ Day release ☐ Part-time (i.e. one or two days per week) ☐

Distance learning ☐ Evening classes ☐ Full-time ☐

Other (please specify)

18) Was the training taken: (please tick the appropriate box)

Prior to your purchasing the business ☐ After you purchased the business ☐
Both before and after the business was purchased ☐

19) How was your training funded (please tick the appropriate box)

Paid for by yourself ☐ Government funded ☐
Other (please specify)

20) Do you feel your training was: (please circle just one of the following)

Extremely beneficial 1	Fairly beneficial 2	Nether beneficial or unbeneficial 3	not particularly beneficial 4	not at all beneficial 5
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21) If no training undertaken what was the reason for this (Please tick appropriate box)

Not interested in training ☐ No time for training ☐ Financial limitations prohibited training ☐
Other (please specify)

22(i) To find out what skills YOU feel are necessary to run a small business successfully, please rate the importance of each of the following (for each factor please tick ONE box on the 1 - 5 scale)

	Extremely important 1	Important 2	Neither Important Nor unimportant 3	unimportant 4	extremely unimportant 5
an aptitude for figures (accounting etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An ability to build good customer relations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The ability to build good relationships with suppliers/contractors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

continued overleaf

An ability to perceive customer needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The ability to recruit good staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An ability to manage staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An ability to manage the day-to-day running of the business	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An ability to make decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

22(ii) How do you rate your current skills levels across the following aspects of running a small business (for each factor please tick ONE box on the 1 - 5 scale)

	Very Adequately Skilled 1	Adequately Skilled 2	Neither adequate/ Inadequate 3	Inadequately Skilled 4	Very Inadequately Skilled 5
An aptitude for figures (accounting etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An ability to build good customer relations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The ability to build good relationships with suppliers/contractors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An ability to perceive customer needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The ability to recruit good staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An ability to manage staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

continued overleaf

An ability to manage
the day-to-day running of
the business

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

An ability to make
decisions

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

23) Who are you MOST LIKELY to consult when in need of advice concerning your business (Please tick the appropriate box)

Relatives (outside the business) ☐

Relatives (within the business) ☐

Staff ☐

Accountant ☐

Bank manager ☐

Business Link ☐

Other (please specify)

24) Do you feel there should be training programmes available which are designed SPECIFICALLY for those owning and managing small purchased businesses (please tick the appropriate box)

Yes ☐

No ☐ (If 'No' please go on to Question 26)

25) With reference to the above question, what form should this training take (please tick the appropriate box)

Evening classes ☐

Day-release ☐

Distance learning ☐

Vocational/on-the-job (e.g. NVQ) ☐

Other (please specify)

26) Are you likely to undergo ANY managerial training in the future (please tick the appropriate box)

Yes, definitely ☐

Possibly ☐

Unsure at present ☐

Definitely not ☐

27) With regards to the purchase price of your business, please tick one of the following

£0 - £10,000 ☐

£50,001 - £100,000 ☐

£10,001 - £25,000 ☐

£100,000+ ☐

£25,001 - £50,000 ☐

28) How was the purchase financed {please tick the appropriate box(es)}

Bank loan (or similar) ☐

Personal savings ☐

Redundancy money ☐

Other (please specify) [_____]

29) Please rate your business in relation to the following

**Very
Successful**

Successful

**Neither
Successful/
Unsuccessful**

Unsuccessful

**Very
Unsuccessful**

30) Please comment on the current rate of sales growth versus last years sales (if this is the first year of ownership, use sales in the year prior to business purchase).

**Annual sales
Declined by
more than
10%**

**Annual Sales
Declined by
1 - 10%**

**Annual Sales
Unchanged**

**Annual Sales
Increased by
1 - 10%**

**Annual Sales
Increased by
more than
10%**

and finally.....

Thank you once again for completing this questionnaire.

If you would be prepared to be contacted again in order to discuss your answers further, please tick the appropriate box(es) below:



I would be willing to be interviewed:

Face to face ☐

By telephone ☐

OWNER-MANAGER QUESTIONNAIRE



Dear Sir/Madam,

I am currently at Plymouth University conducting research for my Doctoral thesis. As the aim of the study is to obtain information pertaining to the every-day running of small purchased businesses, YOUR contribution would be very much appreciated. The following questionnaire has therefore been designed to obtain a wide range of information, without taking too much of your time. (20 minutes maximum!)

Please answer all the questions that apply to YOU as I need to know as much as possible about yourself and your business.

NOTES

- Please return your questionnaire by _____ - there is an S.A.E. provided for your convenience.
- **NB** when a question asks for details concerning the 'CO-OWNER' of your business, this refers to anybody with whom you jointly own and manage the firm, including, (if applicable) your spouse.
- If you have any queries concerning either the questionnaire or the project itself then please do not hesitate to contact me on the following telephone number:- (01803) 215202

Thanking you in advance for your assistance and co-operation, I look forward to receiving your completed questionnaire shortly.

Yours faithfully

Jane Perry MSc

THE SURVEY

COMPANY CHARACTERISTICS - THESE QUESTIONS ARE CONCERNED WITH FINDING OUT ABOUT THE NATURE OF YOUR COMPANY

1) Type of Business (please tick one of the following)

Retail Services ☐

Professional Services ☐

Tourism ☐

Agriculture ☐

Manufacturing ☐

Other (please specify) ☐ _____]

2) How long have you owned your current business (please tick one of the following)

0 - 12 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	31 - 36 months	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 - 18 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	37 months - 5 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
19 - 24 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 - 10 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
25 - 30 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	over 10 years	<input type="checkbox"/>

3) Where was it purchased (please tick one of the following)

Estate agents	<input type="checkbox"/>	Private sale	<input type="checkbox"/>
Auction	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify [_____])	

4) Ownership of the Business (please tick one of the following)

self only	<input type="checkbox"/>	self & partner (husband/wife etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self & business partner	<input type="checkbox"/>	Self and business partners	
		(please state how many partners [_____])	

5) Number of employees (EXCLUDING partners)

None	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 - 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6 - 10	<input type="checkbox"/>	11 - 20	<input type="checkbox"/>	21 - 30	<input type="checkbox"/>
30+	<input type="checkbox"/>								

6) Is this the first business you have owned (please delete as appropriate)

Yes/No (If 'Yes', please go on to QUESTION 7)

7) If 'No' was your other business:

a) Purchased as a going-concern	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) Started from scratch	<input type="checkbox"/>
---------------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------

8) What was your occupation immediately prior to purchasing your (current) business (please tick one of the following)

	<u>Self</u>	<u>Co-owner</u>
Full-time employment (within the same industry as your current business)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

continued overleaf

	<u>Self</u>	<u>Co-owner</u>
Full-time employment (Within an industry NOT the same as your current business)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Part-time employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Full-time education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Part-time education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Voluntary work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-employed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

9) Reasons for purchasing your current business (please tick one box)

- Identification of a good business opportunity ☐
- Desire to control own future/a need for
Independence ☐
- No alternative employment ☐
- Fulfilling an ambition to
'Be Your Own Boss' ☐
- Dissatisfied with previous employment/situation ☐
- Early retirement/redundancy
suggested self-employment
to be a good option ☐
- Age (i.e. at 45+ one may be
considered 'too old' by
prospective employers ☐
- Poor health/limited mobility
(thus making it difficult to
obtain gainful employment
elsewhere) ☐

continued overleaf

Personal circumstances
(e.g. a lack of formal
qualifications/experience etc.)

☐

Other (please specify) [_____]

PERSONAL DETAILS

10) Age (please tick the appropriate box)

Self 16 - 25 ☐
 26 - 35 ☐
 36 - 45 ☐
 46 - 55 ☐
 56 - 65 ☐
 65+ ☐

Co-owner 16 - 25 ☐
 26 - 35 ☐
 36 - 45 ☐
 46 - 55 ☐
 56 - 65 ☐
 65+ ☐

11) Gender (please delete as appropriate)

Self MALE/FEMALE

Co-owner MALE/FEMALE

12) Education & Qualifications (please tick highest level of attainment)

	<u>Self</u>	<u>Co - owner</u>
none	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GCSE(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A' Levels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Degree /		
Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HND/HNC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NVQ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional		
qualification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MBA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other		
(please specify)	[_____]	[_____]

TRAINING

13) Have you or your firms co-owner undertaken any training in conjunction with purchasing your business (please delete as appropriate)

YES/NO (If '**NO**' please go on to **QUESTION 21**)

14) If 'YES' who took this training (please tick appropriate box)

Self only ☐

Co-owner ☐

Self and Co-owner ☐

15) Was this training: (please tick the appropriate box)

Technical (e.g. hairdressing, plumbing,) ☐

Managerial (i.e. that which focuses on the skills required to manage a business) ☐

**Both managerial and technical
(taken as separate courses)** ☐

16) What type of training was this (please tick the appropriate box)

GCSE ☐

A' Levels ☐

HND/HNC /City & Guilds ☐

Degree/Diploma ☐

NVQ ☐

Other (please specify)

17) What form did this training take (please tick the appropriate box)

Seminar ☐ **Day release** ☐ **Part-time (i.e. one or two days per week)** ☐

Distance learning ☐ **Evening classes** ☐ **Full-time** ☐

Other (please specify)

18) Was the the training taken: (please tick the appropriate box)

Prior to your purchasing the business ☐ After you purchased the business ☐
Both before and after the business was purchased ☐

19) How was your training funded (please tick the appropriate box)

Paid for by yourself ☐ Government funded ☐
Other (please specify)

20) Do you feel your training was: (please circle just one of the following)

Extremely beneficial	Fairly beneficial	Nether beneficial or unbeneficial	not particularly beneficial	not at all beneficial
1	2	3	4	5

21) If no training undertaken what was the reason for this (Please tick appropriate box)

Not Interested in training ☐ No time for training ☐ Financial limitations prohibited training ☐ Other (please specify)

22) Who are you MOST LIKELY to consult when in need of advice concerning your business (Please tick the appropriate box)

Relatives (outside the business) ☐ Relatives (within the business) ☐
Staff ☐ Accountant ☐ Bank manager ☐
Business Link ☐ Other (please specify)

23) Do you feel there should be training programmes available which are designed specifically for those owning and managing small purchased businesses (please tick the appropriate box)

Yes ☐ No ☐ (If 'No' please go on to Question 25)

24) With reference to the above question, what form should this training take (please tick appropriate box)

Evening classes ☐ Day-release ☐ Distance learning ☐
 Vocational/on-the-job (e.g. NVQ) ☐ Other (please specify)

25) Looking at the skills listed below, please rate the importance of each for inclusion on training programmes for Owner-managers of purchased businesses (for each factor please tick one box on the 1 - 5 scale)

	Extremely Important 1	Important 2	Neither Important nor unimportant 3	Unimportant 4	Extremely Unimportant 5
Finance (accounting etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing the business generally	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hiring and recruiting staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dealing with suppliers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marketing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Raising capital	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health & Safety Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal Issues (employment law etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing family members (if a family business)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time management (i.e. how to utilise your time effectively)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

continued overleaf

	Extremely Important 1	Important 2	Neither Important nor unimportant 3	unimportant 4	Extremely Unimportant 5
Building good customer relations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Making and 'closing' a sale	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using Information Technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

26) Are you likely to undergo ANY managerial training in the future
(please tick the appropriate box)

Yes, definitely ☐ Possibly ☐ Unsure at present ☐ Definitely not ☐

27) With regards to the purchase price of your business, please tick one of the following

£0 - £10,000 ☐ £50,001 - £100,000 ☐
£10,001 - £25,000 ☐ £100,000+ ☐
£25,001 - £50,000 ☐

28) How was the purchase financed (please tick one of the following)

Bank loan (or similar) ☐ Personal savings ☐
Redundancy money ☐ Other (please specify)

29) Please rate your business in relation to the following

Very Successful Successful Neither Successful/
Unsuccessful Unsuccessful Very Unsuccessful

30) Please comment on the current rate of sales growth versus last years sales (if this is the first year of ownership, use sales in the year prior to business purchase).

**Annual Sales
Declined by
more than
10%**

**Annual Sales
Declined by
1 - 10%**

**Annual Sales
Unchanged**

**Annual Sales
Increased by
1 - 10%**

**Annual Sales
Increased by
more than
10%**

and finally.....

**Thank you once again for completing this questionnaire.
If you would be prepared to be contacted again in order to discuss your
answers further, please tick the appropriate box(es) below:**



I would be willing to be interviewed:

Face to face ☐

By telephone ☐

Preliminary Analyses	Follow-up Analyses	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Objective	Proposition
Crosstabs/Chi-Square	ANOVA	Previous occupation	Business type	2	4
Crosstabs/Chi-Square	Kruskal-Wallis	Business type	Training taken	2, 4	1
Crosstabs/Chi-Square	Kruskal-Wallis	Business type	Likelihood of future training	2, 4	1
Crosstabs/Chi-Square	Kruskal-Wallis	Age	Training taken	2, 4	1
Crosstabs/Chi-Square	Kruskal-Wallis	Age	Likelihood of future training	2, 4	1
Crosstabs/Chi-Square	MANOVA	Ownership status	Training taken/future training	2, 4	1
Crosstabs/Chi-Square	MANOVA	Employee numbers	Training taken/future training	2, 4	1
Crosstabs/Chi-Square	MANOVA	Previous business ownership	Training taken/future training	2, 4	1
Crosstabs/Chi-Square	MANOVA	Academic status	Training taken/future training	2, 4	1
Crosstabs/Chi-Square	ANOVA	Previous occupation	Training taken/future training	2, 4	1, 4
Frequencies	MANOVA	Previous business ownership	Skill ratings for success	1	3, 4
Frequencies	MANOVA	Business type	Skill ratings for success	1	2, 3
Frequencies	MANOVA	Length of time business owned	Skill ratings for success	1	3, 4
Frequencies	MANOVA	Previous business ownership	Skill ratings for training progs	1	3, 4
Frequencies	MANOVA	Length of time business owned	Skill ratings for training progs	1	3
Frequencies	MANOVA	Business type	Skill ratings for training progs	1	2, 3
Frequencies	MANOVA	Previous business ownership	Perceptions of skill levels	3	1, 4
Frequencies	MANOVA	Length of time business owned	Perceptions of skill levels	3	1
Crosstabs/Chi-Square	Kruskal-Wallis	Training taken	Sale levels/success ratings	2, 4	1
Crosstabs/Chi-Square	Kruskal-Wallis	Business type	Preferred methods of training	4	5

How the statistical analyses relate to the research objectives and propositions

Frequencies

[DataSet1] F:\merged data.sav

Statistics

		Is this the first business owned	If 'No' what was other business	Gender (self)	Gender (co-ownr)	If 'Yes' who took this training	What was the training
N	Valid	350	93	350	255	54	54
	Missing	2	259	2	97	298	298

Statistics

		What form did the training take	When was the training taken	How was the training funded	How beneficial was the training	If no training taken - WHY	Who is consulted when business advice required
N	Valid	54	54	54	54	296	350
	Missing	298	298	298	298	56	2

Statistics

		What form should the training for OMs of PBs take	Will you take any managerial training in the future	How successful is your business	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	'firm owned how long'	'firm bought where'
N	Valid	269	350	350	350	350	350
	Missing	83	2	2	2	2	2

Statistics

		'firm owned by who'	occupation prior to buying business	occupation prior to buying business (co-own)	Why buy the business	Age	Age (co-own)
N	Valid	348	350	253	348	350	255
	Missing	4	2	99	4	2	97

Statistics

		Edu & quals	Edu & quals (co-own)	how much paid for business	How was the business funded	Business type	employee numbers
N	Valid	350	256	350	350	350	350
	Missing	2	96	2	2	2	2

Statistics

		overall	duration	Training type	academic status	future training	Training taken
N	Valid	352	350	54	350	350	350
	Missing	0	2	298	2	2	2

Statistics

		age	special training	form of training	Number of employees	age co-owner
N	Valid	350	349	47	350	255
	Missing	2	3	305	2	97

Statistics

		previous occupation	previous occupation (co-owner)
N	Valid	350	253
	Missing	2	99

Frequency Table

Is this the first business owned

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	249	70.7	71.1	71.1
	no	101	28.7	28.9	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

If 'No' what was other business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	purchased as a going-concern	59	16.8	63.4	63.4
	started from scratch	34	9.7	36.6	100.0
	Total	93	26.4	100.0	
Missing	System	259	73.6		
Total		352	100.0		

Gender (self)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	221	62.8	63.1	63.1
	female	129	36.6	36.9	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

Gender (co-ownr)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	90	25.6	35.3	35.3
	female	165	46.9	64.7	100.0
	Total	255	72.4	100.0	
Missing	System	97	27.6		
Total		352	100.0		

If 'Yes' who took this training

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	self only	30	8.5	55.6	55.6
	co-owner	8	2.3	14.8	70.4
	self and co-owner	16	4.5	29.6	100.0
	Total	54	15.3	100.0	
Missing	System	298	84.7		
Total		352	100.0		

What was the training

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	technical	28	8.0	51.9	51.9
	managerial	13	3.7	24.1	75.9
	Both managerial AND technical	13	3.7	24.1	100.0
	Total	54	15.3	100.0	
Missing	System	298	84.7		
Total		352	100.0		

What form did the training take

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	seminar	17	4.8	31.5	31.5
	Day release	4	1.1	7.4	38.9
	part-time (i.e.one or two days per week)	9	2.6	16.7	55.6
	Distance learning	3	.9	5.6	61.1
	Evening classes	14	4.0	25.9	87.0
	Full-time	7	2.0	13.0	100.0
	Total	54	15.3	100.0	
Missing	System	298	84.7		
Total		352	100.0		

When was the training taken

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Prior to purchasing your business	28	8.0	51.9	51.9
	After you purchased the business	15	4.3	27.8	79.6
	Both before AND after your purchased the business	11	3.1	20.4	100.0
	Total	54	15.3	100.0	
Missing	System	298	84.7		
Total		352	100.0		

How was the training funded

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Paid for by yourself	39	11.1	72.2	72.2
	Government funded	11	3.1	20.4	92.6
	Other	4	1.1	7.4	100.0
	Total	54	15.3	100.0	
Missing	System	298	84.7		
Total		352	100.0		

How beneficial was the training

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely beneficial	26	7.4	48.1	48.1
	fairly beneficial	26	7.4	48.1	96.3
	neither beneficial or unbeneficial	2	.6	3.7	100.0
	Total	54	15.3	100.0	
Missing	System	298	84.7		
Total		352	100.0		

If no training taken - WHY

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	not interested in training	40	11.4	13.5	13.5
	no time for training	175	49.7	59.1	72.6
	Financial limitations prohibited training	28	8.0	9.5	82.1
	Other	53	15.1	17.9	100.0
	Total	296	84.1	100.0	
Missing	System	56	15.9		
Total		352	100.0		

Who is consulted when business advice required

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	relatives outside the business	35	9.9	10.0	10.0
	relatives within the business	22	6.3	6.3	16.3
	staff	9	2.6	2.6	18.9
	accountant	150	42.6	42.9	61.7
	bank manager	112	31.8	32.0	93.7
	Business Link	16	4.5	4.6	98.3
	other	6	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0	.	

What form should the training for OM's of PBs take

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	evening classes	115	32.7	42.8	42.8
	day-release	56	15.9	20.8	63.6
	distance learning	68	19.3	25.3	88.8
	vocational/on-the-job (e.g. NVQ)	27	7.7	10.0	98.9
	Other	3	.9	1.1	100.0
	Total	269	76.4	100.0	
Missing	System	83	23.6		
Total		352	100.0		

Will you take any managerial training in the future

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes, definitely	8	2.3	2.3	2.3
	possibly	32	9.1	9.1	11.4
	unsure at present	131	37.2	37.4	48.9
	definitely not	179	50.9	51.1	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

How successful is your business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very successful	72	20.5	20.6	20.6
	successful	224	63.6	64.0	84.6
	neither successful nor unsuccessful	54	15.3	15.4	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

Current rate of sales growth v last years sales

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	annual sales declined by more than 10%	8	2.3	2.3	2.3
	annual sales declined by 1 - 10%	26	7.4	7.4	9.7
	annual sales unchanged	139	39.5	39.7	49.4
	annual sales increased by 1 - 10%	131	37.2	37.4	86.9
	annual sales increased by more than 10%	46	13.1	13.1	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

'firm owned how long'

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-18 months	100	28.4	28.6	28.6
	19-36 months	191	54.3	54.6	83.1
	3 years or over	59	16.8	16.9	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

'firm bought where'

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	estate agents	211	59.9	60.3	60.3
	private sale	139	39.5	39.7	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

'firm owned by who'

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	self only	95	27.0	27.3	27.3
	self & business partner (inc spouse etc)	253	71.9	72.7	100.0
	Total	348	98.9	100.0	
Missing	System	4	1.1		
Total		352	100.0		

occupation prior to buying business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	full time employment	176	50.0	50.3	50.3
	part time employment	66	18.8	18.9	69.1
	full time/part time education	24	6.8	6.9	76.0
	self employed	84	23.9	24.0	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

A25

occupation prior to buying business (co-own)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	full time employment	94	26.7	37.2	37.2
	part time employment	75	21.3	29.6	66.8
	full time/part time education	28	8.0	11.1	77.9
	self employed	56	15.9	22.1	100.0
	Total	253	71.9	100.0	
Missing	System	99	28.1		
Total		352	100.0		

Why buy the business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Identified good business opportunity	130	36.9	37.4	37.4
	Need for independence/desire to control future	134	38.1	38.5	75.9
	no alternative employment/personal circumstances (health, ag	84	23.9	24.1	100.0
	Total	348	98.9	100.0	
Missing	System	4	1.1		
Total		352	100.0		

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16-35	43	12.2	12.3	12.3
	36-55	268	76.1	76.6	88.9
	56 or over	39	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

Age (co-own)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16-35	23	6.5	9.0	9.0
	36-55	207	58.8	81.2	90.2
	56 or over	25	7.1	9.8	100.0
	Total	255	72.4	100.0	
Missing	System	97	27.6		
Total		352	100.0		

Edu & quals

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	none	55	15.6	15.7	15.7
	GCSEs/A levels	147	41.8	42.0	57.7
	Professional qualification (deg/dip etc)	148	42.0	42.3	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

Edu & quals (co-own)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	none	61	17.3	23.8	23.8
	GCSEs/A levels	121	34.4	47.3	71.1
	Professional qualification (deg/dip etc)	74	21.0	28.9	100.0
	Total	256	72.7	100.0	
Missing	System	96	27.3		
Total		352	100.0		

how much paid for business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-25,000	56	15.9	16.0	16.0
	26,000-50,000	94	26.7	26.9	42.9
	51,000-100,000	155	44.0	44.3	87.1
	100,000 plus	45	12.8	12.9	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

How was the business funded

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bank loan or similar	277	78.7	79.1	79.1
	personal savings	73	20.7	20.9	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

Business type

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	retail services	121	34.4	34.6	34.6
	professional services	73	20.7	20.9	55.4
	tourism	156	44.3	44.6	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

employee numbers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	none	140	39.8	40.0	40.0
	1-10	210	59.7	60.0	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

overall

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	OVERALL	352	100.0	100.0	100.0

duration

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0 - 2 years	146	41.5	41.7	41.7
	2 years or over	204	58.0	58.3	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

Training type

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	technical	28	8.0	51.9	51.9
	managerial or managerial & technical	26	7.4	48.1	100.0
	Total	54	15.3	100.0	
Missing	System	298	84.7		
Total		352	100.0		

academic status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	no formal qualifications	55	15.6	15.7	15.7
	GCSEs or above	295	83.8	84.3	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

future training

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	definitely	8	2.3	2.3	2.3
	possibly, unsure at present	163	46.3	46.6	48.9
	definitely not	179	50.9	51.1	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0	A28	

Training taken

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	54	15.3	15.4	15.4
	No	296	84.1	84.6	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16-30	43	12.2	12.3	12.3
	31-40	146	41.5	41.7	54.0
	41-50	122	34.7	34.9	88.9
	51+	39	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

special training

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	270	76.7	77.4	77.4
	no	79	22.4	22.6	100.0
	Total	349	99.1	100.0	
Missing	System	3	.9		
Total		352	100.0		

form of training

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	HND/HNC etc.	21	6.0	44.7	44.7
	Degree/diploma	9	2.6	19.1	63.8
	NVQ	3	.9	6.4	70.2
	Other	14	4.0	29.8	100.0
	Total	47	13.4	100.0	
Missing	System	305	86.6		
Total		352	100.0		

Number of employees

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	none	140	39.8	40.0	40.0
	1 - 5	189	53.7	54.0	94.0
	6 - 10	21	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

age co-owner

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16-30	23	6.5	9.0	9.0
	31-40	125	35.5	49.0	58.0
	41-50	82	23.3	32.2	90.2
	51+	25	7.1	9.8	100.0
	Total	255	72.4	100.0	
Missing	System	97	27.6		
Total		352	100.0		

previous occupation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	FT employment same industry as business	61	17.3	17.4	17.4
	FT employment different industry as business	115	32.7	32.9	50.3
	FT or PT education	66	18.8	18.9	69.1
	unemployed	24	6.8	6.9	76.0
	self employed	25	7.1	7.1	83.1
	other	59	16.8	16.9	100.0
	Total	350	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		352	100.0		

previous occupation (co-owner)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	FT employment same industry as business	29	8.2	11.5	11.5
	FT employment different industry as business	65	18.5	25.7	37.2
	PT work	75	21.3	29.6	66.8
	FT/PT education	28	8.0	11.1	77.9
	unemployed	20	5.7	7.9	85.8
	self employed	36	10.2	14.2	100.0
	Total	253	71.9	100.0	
Missing	System	99	28.1		
Total		352	100.0		

Frequencies

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Statistics

		Type of business	How long current business owned	Where was business purchased	Who owns the business	Number of employees	Is this the first business owned
N	Valid	175	175	175	175	175	175
	Missing	1	1	1	1	1	1

Statistics

		If 'no' what was other business	What was your occupation before buying business (self)	Age (self)	Age (co-ownr)	Gender (self)	Gender (co-ownr)
N	Valid	35	175	175	129	175	129
	Missing	141	1	1	47	1	47

Statistics

		Education & Quals (self)	Education & quals (co-ownr)	Any training taken in ass. with buying business	If 'yes', who took this training	What was this training	What type of training was this
N	Valid	175	130	175	18	18	18
	Missing	1	46	1	158	158	158

Statistics

		What form did this training take	When was the training taken	How was the training funded	How beneficial was the training	If no training taken - WHY	Who are you most likely to ask for business advice
N	Valid	18	18	18	18	157	175
	Missing	158	158	158	158	19	1

Statistics

		Should there be special training programmes for OM's of PBs	What form should this training take	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)
N	Valid	174	138	138	138	138	138
	Missing	2	38	38	31	38	38

Statistics

		Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)
N	Valid	138	138	138	138	138	138
	Missing	38	38	38	38	38	38

Statistics

		Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT)	Will you take any training in the future	How much did you pay for your business
N	Valid	138	138	138	138	175	175
	Missing	38	38	38	38	1	1

Statistics

		How was the purchase funded	How successful is your business	How is sales growth compared to last year	Occupation before starting business (co-ow)	reasons for purchasing current business	'firm owned how long'
N	Valid	175	175	175	125	173	175
	Missing	1	1	1	51	3	1

Statistics

		'firm bought where'	'firm owned by who'	occupation prior to buying business	occupation prior to buying business (co-own)	Why buy the business	Age
N	Valid	175	173	175	125	173	175
	Missing	1	3	1	51	3	1

Statistics

		Age (co-own)	how much paid for business	How was the business funded	Business type	employee numbers	Edu & quals
N	Valid	129	175	175	175	175	175
	Missing	47	1	1	1	1	1

Statistics

		Edu & quals (co-own)	overall	future training	academic status	age	what type of training	duration
N	Valid	130	176	175	175	175	18	175
	Missing	46	0	1	1	1	158	1

Statistics

		owners	whose firm	what length
N	Valid	175	175	175
	Missing	1	1	1

Frequency Table

Type of business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	retail services	57	32.4	32.6	32.6
	professional services	28	15.9	16.0	48.6
	tourism	89	50.6	50.9	99.4
	manufacturing	1	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

How long current business owned

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0 - 12 months	24	13.6	13.7	13.7
	13 - 18 months	30	17.0	17.1	30.9
	19 - 24 months	46	26.1	26.3	57.1
	25 - 30 months	46	26.1	26.3	83.4
	31 - 36 months	12	6.8	6.9	90.3
	37 months - 5 years	7	4.0	4.0	94.3
	5 - 10 years	7	4.0	4.0	98.3
	over 10 years	3	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Where was business purchased

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	estate agents	96	54.5	54.9	54.9
	private sale	78	44.3	44.6	99.4
	auction	1	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Who owns the business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	self only	47	26.7	26.9	26.9
	self & partner (e.g.wife)	121	68.8	69.1	96.0
	self & business partner	5	2.8	2.9	98.9
	self & business partners (state number)	2	1.1	1.1	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Number of employees

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	none	76	43.2	43.4	43.4
	1 - 5	91	51.7	52.0	95.4
	6 - 10	8	4.5	4.6	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Is this the first business owned

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	140	79.5	80.0	80.0
	no	35	19.9	20.0	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

If 'no' what was other business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	purchased as a going-concern	26	14.8	74.3	74.3
	started from scratch	9	5.1	25.7	100.0
	Total	35	19.9	100.0	
Missing	System	141	80.1		
Total		176	100.0		

What was your occupation before buying business (self)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	full time employment (same industry)	26	14.8	14.9	14.9
	full time employment (different industry)	62	35.2	35.4	50.3
	part-time work	41	23.3	23.4	73.7
	full time education	11	6.3	6.3	80.0
	part-time education	1	.6	.6	80.6
	unemployed	9	5.1	5.1	85.7
	voluntary work	5	2.8	2.9	88.6
	self employed	20	11.4	11.4	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6	A34	
Total		176	100.0		

Age (self)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16 - 25	2	1.1	1.1	1.1
	26 - 35	18	10.2	10.3	11.4
	36 - 45	82	46.6	46.9	58.3
	46 - 55	61	34.7	34.9	93.1
	56 - 65	10	5.7	5.7	98.9
	65+	2	1.1	1.1	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Age (co-ownr)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16 - 25	3	1.7	2.3	2.3
	26 - 35	2	1.1	1.6	3.9
	36 - 45	72	40.9	55.8	59.7
	46 - 55	43	24.4	33.3	93.0
	56 - 65	8	4.5	6.2	99.2
	65+	1	.6	.8	100.0
	Total	129	73.3	100.0	
Missing	System	47	26.7		
Total		176	100.0		

Gender (self)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	112	63.6	64.0	64.0
	female	63	35.8	36.0	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Gender (co-ownr)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	43	24.4	33.3	33.3
	female	86	48.9	66.7	100.0
	Total	129	73.3	100.0	
Missing	System	47	26.7		
Total		176	100.0		

Education & Quals (self)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	none	32	18.2	18.3	18.3
	GCSEs	36	20.5	20.6	38.9
	A' levels	37	21.0	21.1	60.0
	degree/diploma	39	22.2	22.3	82.3
	HND/HNC	11	6.3	6.3	88.6
	NVQ	7	4.0	4.0	92.6
	professional qual.	13	7.4	7.4	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Education & quals (co-ownr)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	none	36	20.5	27.7	27.7
	GCSEs	41	23.3	31.5	59.2
	A' levels	22	12.5	16.9	76.2
	degree/diploma	19	10.8	14.6	90.8
	HND/HNC	8	4.5	6.2	96.9
	professional qual.	4	2.3	3.1	100.0
	Total	130	73.9	100.0	
Missing	System	46	26.1		
Total		176	100.0		

Any training taken in ass. with buying business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	18	10.2	10.3	10.3
	no	157	89.2	89.7	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

If 'yes', who took this training

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	self only	12	6.8	66.7	66.7
	co-owner	3	1.7	16.7	83.3
	self & co-owner	3	1.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	10.2	100.0	
Missing	System	158	89.8		
Total		176	100.0		

What was this training

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	technical	8	4.5	44.4	44.4
	managerial	2	1.1	11.1	55.6
	both managerial and technical	8	4.5	44.4	100.0
	Total	18	10.2	100.0	
Missing	System	158	89.8		
Total		176	100.0		

What type of training was this

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	HND/HNC/city & guilds	4	2.3	22.2	22.2
	degree/diploma	10	5.7	55.6	77.8
	NVQ	1	.6	5.6	83.3
	other	3	1.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	10.2	100.0	
Missing	System	158	89.8		
Total		176	100.0		

What form did this training take

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	seminar	1	.6	5.6	5.6
	part-time	4	2.3	22.2	27.8
	evening classes	11	6.3	61.1	88.9
	full-time	2	1.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	18	10.2	100.0	
Missing	System	158	89.8		
Total		176	100.0		

When was the training taken

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	before buying business	14	8.0	77.8	77.8
	after buying business	4	2.3	22.2	100.0
	Total	18	10.2	100.0	
Missing	System	158	89.8		
Total		176	100.0		

How was the training funded

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	paid for by yourself	15	8.5	83.3	83.3
	government funded	1	.6	5.6	88.9
	other	2	1.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	18	10.2	100.0	
Missing	System	158	89.8		
Total		176	100.0		

How beneficial was the training

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely beneficial	7	4.0	38.9	38.9
	fairly beneficial	9	5.1	50.0	88.9
	neither beneficial nor unbeneficial	2	1.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	18	10.2	100.0	
Missing	System	158	89.8		
Total		176	100.0		

If no training taken - WHY

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	not interested in training	24	13.6	15.3	15.3
	no time for training	103	58.5	65.6	80.9
	financial limitations	8	4.5	5.1	86.0
	other	22	12.5	14.0	100.0
	Total	157	89.2	100.0	
Missing	System	19	10.8		
Total		176	100.0		

Who are you most likely to ask for business advice

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	relatives outside the business	26	14.8	14.9	14.9
	relatives within the business	7	4.0	4.0	18.9
	staff	1	.6	.6	19.4
	accountant	70	39.8	40.0	59.4
	bank manager	64	36.4	36.6	96.0
	business link	2	1.1	1.1	97.1
	other	5	2.8	2.9	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Should there be special training programmes for OM's of PBs

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	138	78.4	79.3	79.3
	no	36	20.5	20.7	100.0
	Total	174	98.9	100.0	
Missing	System	2	1.1		
Total		176	100.0		

What form should this training take

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	evening classes	49	27.8	35.5	35.5
	day release	33	18.8	23.9	59.4
	distance learning	38	21.6	27.5	87.0
	vocational (e.g. NVQ)	17	9.7	12.3	99.3
	other	1	.6	.7	100.0
	Total	138	78.4	100.0	
Missing	System	38	21.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	94	53.4	68.1	68.1
	important	41	23.3	29.7	97.8
	neither important nor unimportant	3	1.7	2.2	100.0
	Total	138	78.4	100.0	
Missing	System	38	21.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	100	56.8	72.5	72.5
	important	33	18.8	23.9	96.4
	neither important nor unimportant	5	2.8	3.6	100.0
	Total	138	78.4	100.0	
Missing	System	38	21.6		
Total		176	100.0		

should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	30	17.0	21.7	21.7
	important	67	38.1	48.6	70.3
	neither important nor unimportant	33	18.8	23.9	94.2
	unimportant	7	4.0	5.1	99.3
	extremely unimportant	1	.6	.7	100.0
	Total	138	78.4	100.0	
Missing	System	38	21.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	60	34.1	43.5	43.5
	important	47	26.7	34.1	77.5
	neither important nor unimportant	29	16.5	21.0	98.6
	unimportant	2	1.1	1.4	100.0
	Total	138	78.4	100.0	
Missing	System	38	21.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	22	12.5	15.9	15.9
	important	32	18.2	23.2	39.1
	neither important nor unimportant	49	27.8	35.5	74.6
	unimportant	29	16.5	21.0	95.7
	extremely unimportant	6	3.4	4.3	100.0
	Total	138	78.4	100.0	
Missing	System	38	21.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	29	16.5	21.0	21.0
	important	69	39.2	50.0	71.0
	neither important nor unimportant	30	17.0	21.7	92.8
	unimportant	8	4.5	5.8	98.6
	extremely unimportant	2	1.1	1.4	100.0
	Total	138	78.4	100.0	
Missing	System	38	21.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	55	31.3	39.9	39.9
	important	56	31.8	40.6	80.4
	neither important nor unimportant	22	12.5	15.9	96.4
	unimportant	3	1.7	2.2	98.6
	extremely unimportant	2	1.1	1.4	100.0
	Total	138	78.4	100.0	
Missing	System	38	21.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	24	13.6	17.4	17.4
	important	43	24.4	31.2	48.6
	neither important nor unimportant	40	22.7	29.0	77.5
	unimportant	19	10.8	13.8	91.3
	extremely unimportant	12	6.8	8.7	100.0
	Total	138	78.4	100.0	
Missing	System	38	21.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	32	18.2	23.2	23.2
	important	47	26.7	34.1	57.2
	neither important nor unimportant	43	24.4	31.2	88.4
	unimportant	12	6.8	8.7	97.1
	extremely unimportant	4	2.3	2.9	100.0
	Total	138	78.4	100.0	
Missing	System	38	21.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	25	14.2	18.1	18.1
	important	37	21.0	26.8	44.9
	neither important nor unimportant	51	29.0	37.0	81.9
	unimportant	22	12.5	15.9	97.8
	extremely unimportant	3	1.7	2.2	100.0
	Total	138	78.4	100.0	
Missing	System	38	21.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	34	19.3	24.6	24.6
	important	45	25.6	32.6	57.2
	neither important nor unimportant	49	27.8	35.5	92.8
	unimportant	9	5.1	6.5	99.3
	extremely unimportant	1	.6	.7	100.0
	Total	138	78.4	100.0	
Missing	System	38	21.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	88	50.0	63.8	63.8
	important	28	15.9	20.3	84.1
	neither important nor unimportant	19	10.8	13.8	97.8
	unimportant	2	1.1	1.4	99.3
	extremely unimportant	1	.6	.7	100.0
	Total	138	78.4	100.0	
Missing	System	38	21.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	32	18.2	23.2	23.2
	important	43	24.4	31.2	54.3
	neither important nor unimportant	42	23.9	30.4	84.8
	unimportant	12	6.8	8.7	93.5
	extremely unimportant	9	5.1	6.5	100.0
	Total	138	78.4	100.0	
Missing	System	38	21.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	22	12.5	15.9	15.9
	important	39	22.2	28.3	44.2
	neither important nor unimportant	48	27.3	34.8	79.0
	unimportant	27	15.3	19.6	98.6
	extremely unimportant	2	1.1	1.4	100.0
	Total	138	78.4	100.0	
Missing	System	38	21.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Will you take any training in the future

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes definitely	5	2.8	2.9	2.9
	possibly	18	10.2	10.3	13.1
	unsure at present	64	36.4	36.6	49.7
	defintiely not	88	50.0	50.3	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

How much did you pay for your business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	£0 - £10,000	7	4.0	4.0	4.0
	£10,001 - £25,000	12	6.8	6.9	10.9
	£25,001 - £50,000	42	23.9	24.0	34.9
	£50,001 - £100,000	99	56.3	56.6	91.4
	£100,000+	15	8.5	8.6	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

How was the purchase funded

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bank loan or similar	140	79.5	80.0	80.0
	personal savings	23	13.1	13.1	93.1
	redundancy money	11	6.3	6.3	99.4
	other	1	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

How successful is your business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very successful	40	22.7	22.9	22.9
	successful	120	68.2	68.6	91.4
	neither successful nor unsuccessful	15	8.5	8.6	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

How is sales growth compared to last year

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	annual sales declined by more than 10%	1	.6	.6	.6
	Annual sales declined by 1 - 10%	3	1.7	1.7	2.3
	Annual sales unchanged	84	47.7	48.0	50.3
	annual sales increased by 1 - 10%	60	34.1	34.3	84.6
	annual sales increased by more than 10%	27	15.3	15.4	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Occupation before starting business (co-ow)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	19	10.8	15.2	15.2
	2	34	19.3	27.2	42.4
	3	42	23.9	33.6	76.0
	4	6	3.4	4.8	80.8
	5	5	2.8	4.0	84.8
	6	6	3.4	4.8	89.6
	8	13	7.4	10.4	100.0
	Total	125	71.0	100.0	
Missing	System	51	29.0		
Total		176	100.0		

reasons for purchasing current business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	62	35.2	35.8	35.8
	2	62	35.2	35.8	71.7
	4	21	11.9	12.1	83.8
	5	16	9.1	9.2	93.1
	6	9	5.1	5.2	98.3
	7	1	.6	.6	98.8
	9	2	1.1	1.2	100.0
	Total	173	98.3	100.0	
Missing	System	3	1.7		
Total		176	100.0		

'firm owned how long'

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-18 months	54	30.7	30.9	30.9
	19-36 months	104	59.1	59.4	90.3
	3 years or over	17	9.7	9.7	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

'firm bought where'

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	estate agents	97	55.1	55.4	55.4
	private sale	78	44.3	44.6	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

'firm owned by who'

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	self only	47	26.7	27.2	27.2
	self & business partner (inc spouse etc)	126	71.6	72.8	100.0
	Total	173	98.3	100.0	
Missing	System	3	1.7		
Total		176	100.0		

occupation prior to buying business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	full time employment	88	50.0	50.3	50.3
	part time employment	41	23.3	23.4	73.7
	full time/part time education	12	6.8	6.9	80.6
	self employed	34	19.3	19.4	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

occupation prior to buying business (co-own)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	full time employment	53	30.1	42.4	42.4
	part time employment	42	23.9	33.6	76.0
	full time/part time education	11	6.3	8.8	84.8
	self employed	19	10.8	15.2	100.0
	Total	125	71.0	100.0	
Missing	System	51	29.0		
Total		176	100.0		

Why buy the business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Identified good business opportunity	62	35.2	35.8	35.8
	Need for independence/desire to control future	62	35.2	35.8	71.7
	no alternative employment/personal circumstances (health, ag	49	27.8	28.3	100.0
	Total	173	98.3	100.0	
Missing	System	3	1.7	A44	
Total		176	100.0		

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16-35	20	11.4	11.4	11.4
	36-55	143	81.3	81.7	93.1
	56 or over	12	6.8	6.9	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Age (co-own)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16-35	5	2.8	3.9	3.9
	36-55	115	65.3	89.1	93.0
	56 or over	9	5.1	7.0	100.0
	Total	129	73.3	100.0	
Missing	System	47	26.7		
Total		176	100.0		

how much paid for business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-25,000	19	10.8	10.9	10.9
	26,000-50,000	42	23.9	24.0	34.9
	51,000-100,000	99	56.3	56.6	91.4
	100,000 plus	15	8.5	8.6	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

How was the business funded

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bank loan or similar	151	85.8	86.3	86.3
	personal savings	24	13.6	13.7	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Business type

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	retail services	57	32.4	32.6	32.6
	professional services	29	16.5	16.6	49.1
	tourism	89	50.6	50.9	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

employee numbers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	none	76	43.2	43.4	43.4
	1-10	99	56.3	56.6	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Edu & quals

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	none	32	18.2	18.3	18.3
	GCSEs/A levels	73	41.5	41.7	60.0
	Professional qualification (deg/dip etc)	70	39.8	40.0	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Edu & quals (co-own)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	none	36	20.5	27.7	27.7
	GCSEs/A levels	63	35.8	48.5	76.2
	Professional qualification (deg/dip etc)	31	17.6	23.8	100.0
	Total	130	73.9	100.0	
Missing	System	46	26.1		
Total		176	100.0		

overall

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	OVERALL	176	100.0	100.0	100.0

future training

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes definitely	5	2.8	2.9	2.9
	Possibly	82	46.6	46.9	49.7
	Definitely not	88	50.0	50.3	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

academic status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	no formal qualifications	32	18.2	18.3	18.3
	GCSEs or above	143	81.3	81.7	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0	A46	

age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16-30	20	11.4	11.4	11.4
	31-40	82	46.6	46.9	58.3
	41-50	61	34.7	34.9	93.1
	51+	12	6.8	6.9	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

what type of training

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	technical only	8	4.5	44.4	44.4
	managerial and technical	10	5.7	55.6	100.0
	Total	18	10.2	100.0	
Missing	System	158	89.8		
Total		176	100.0		

duration

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-2 years	54	30.7	30.9	30.9
	2 years or over	121	68.8	69.1	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

owners

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	self only	47	26.7	26.9	26.9
	self and partner (inc spouse)	126	71.6	72.0	98.9
	self and business partners	2	1.1	1.1	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

whose firm

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	self only	47	26.7	26.9	26.9
	self and partner (inc spouse)	128	72.7	73.1	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

what length

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-18 months	54	30.7	30.9	30.9
	19-36 months	92	52.3	52.6	83.4
	3 years or over	29	16.5	16.6	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

requencies

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Statistics

		Is this the first business owned	If 'No' what was other business	Gender (self)	Gender (co-ownr)	Any training taken in ass. with buying business	If 'Yes' who took this training
N	Valid	175	58	175	126	175	36
	Missing	1	118	1	50	1	140

Statistics

		What was the training	What type of training was it	What form did the training take	When was the training taken	How was the training funded	How beneficial was the training
N	Valid	36	36	36	36	36	36
	Missing	140	140	140	140	140	140

Statistics

		If no training taken - WHY	What skills do you need (accounting)	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	What skills do you need (recruit staff)
N	Valid	139	175	175	175	175	175
	Missing	37	1	1	1	1	1

Statistics

		What skills do you need (manage staff)	What skills do you need (manage business)	What skills do you need (make decisions)	How good are your skills (figure work)	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)
N	Valid	175	175	175	175	175	175
	Missing	1	1	1	1	1	1

Statistics

		How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	Who is consulted when business advice required
N	Valid	175	175	175	175	175	175
	Missing	1	1	1	1	1	1

Statistics

		Should there be special training for OMs of PBs	What form should the training for OMs of PBs take	Will you take any managerial training in the future	How successful is your business	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	'firm owned how long'
N	Valid	175	131	175	175	175	175
	Missing	1	45	1	1	1	1

Statistics

		'firm bought where'	'firm owned by who'	occupation prior to buying business	occupation prior to buying business (co-own)	Why buy the business	Age
N	Valid	175	175	175	128	175	175
	Missing	1	1	1	48	1	1

Statistics

		Age (co-own)	Edu & quals	Edu & quals (co-own)	how much paid for business	How was the business funded	Business type
N	Valid	126	175	126	175	175	175
	Missing	50	1	50	1	1	1

Statistics

		employee numbers	overall	length of time owned	Training type	academic status	future training	age
N	Valid	175	176	175	36	175	175	175
	Missing	1	0	1	140	1	1	1

Frequency Table

Is this the first business owned

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	109	61.9	62.3	62.3
	no	66	37.5	37.7	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

If 'No' what was other business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	purchased as a going-concern	33	18.8	56.9	56.9
	started from scratch	25	14.2	43.1	100.0
	Total	58	33.0	100.0	
Missing	System	118	67.0		
Total		176	100.0		

Gender (self)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	109	61.9	62.3	62.3
	female	66	37.5	37.7	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Gender (co-ownr)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	47	26.7	37.3	37.3
	female	79	44.9	62.7	100.0
	Total	126	71.6	100.0	
Missing	System	50	28.4		
Total		176	100.0		

Any training taken in ass. with buying business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	no	139	79.0	79.4	79.4
	yes	36	20.5	20.6	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

If 'Yes' who took this training

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	self only	18	10.2	50.0	50.0
	co-owner	5	2.8	13.9	63.9
	self and co-owner	13	7.4	36.1	100.0
	Total	36	20.5	100.0	
Missing	System	140	79.5		
Total		176	100.0		

What was the training

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	technical	20	11.4	55.6	55.6
	managerial	11	6.3	30.6	86.1
	Both managerial AND technical	5	2.8	13.9	100.0
	Total	36	20.5	100.0	
Missing	System	140	79.5		
Total		176	100.0		

What type of training was it

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	A' levels	1	.6	2.8	2.8
	HND/HNC/City & Guilds	13	7.4	36.1	38.9
	Degree/Diploma	4	2.3	11.1	50.0
	NVQ	3	1.7	8.3	58.3
	Other	15	8.5	41.7	100.0
	Total	36	20.5	100.0	
Missing	System	140	79.5		
Total		176	100.0		

What form did the training take

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	seminar	16	9.1	44.4	44.4
	Day release	4	2.3	11.1	55.6
	part-time (i.e.one or two days per week)	5	2.8	13.9	69.4
	Distance learning	3	1.7	8.3	77.8
	Evening classes	3	1.7	8.3	86.1
	Full-time	5	2.8	13.9	100.0
	Total	36	20.5	100.0	
Missing	System	140	79.5		
Total		176	100.0		

When was the training taken

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Prior to purchasing your business	14	8.0	38.9	38.9
	After you purchased the business	11	6.3	30.6	69.4
	Both before AND after your purchased the business	11	6.3	30.6	100.0
	Total	36	20.5	100.0	
Missing	System	140	79.5		
Total		176	100.0		

How was the training funded

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Paid for by yourself	24	13.6	66.7	66.7
	Government funded	10	5.7	27.8	94.4
	Other	2	1.1	5.6	100.0
	Total	36	20.5	100.0	
Missing	System	140	79.5		
Total		176	100.0		

How beneficial was the training

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely beneficial	19	10.8	52.8	52.8
	fairly beneficial	17	9.7	47.2	100.0
	Total	36	20.5	100.0	
Missing	System	140	79.5		
Total		176	100.0		

If no training taken - WHY

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	not interested in training	16	9.1	11.5	11.5
	no time for training	72	40.9	51.8	63.3
	Financial limitations prohibited training	20	11.4	14.4	77.7
	Other	31	17.6	22.3	100.0
	Total	139	79.0	100.0	
Missing	System	37	21.0		
Total		176	100.0		

What skills do you need (accounting)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	53	30.1	30.3	30.3
	important	106	60.2	60.6	90.9
	neither important nor unimportant	13	7.4	7.4	98.3
	unimportant	3	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

What skills do you need (bld cust rels)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	116	65.9	66.3	66.3
	important	53	30.1	30.3	96.6
	neither important nor unimportant	6	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

What skills do you need (rels with supls)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	56	31.8	32.0	32.0
	important	62	35.2	35.4	67.4
	neither important nor unimportant	29	16.5	16.6	84.0
	unimportant	16	9.1	9.1	93.1
	extremely unimportant	12	6.8	6.9	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

What skills do you need (know cust needs)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	88	50.0	50.3	50.3
	important	64	36.4	36.6	86.9
	neither important nor unimportant	23	13.1	13.1	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

What skills do you need (recruit staff)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	79	44.9	45.1	45.1
	important	67	38.1	38.3	83.4
	neither important nor unimportant	20	11.4	11.4	94.9
	unimportant	6	3.4	3.4	98.3
	extremely unimportant	3	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

What skills do you need (manage staff)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	70	39.8	40.0	40.0
	important	82	46.6	46.9	86.9
	neither important nor unimportant	19	10.8	10.9	97.7
	unimportant	4	2.3	2.3	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

What skills do you need (manage business)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	73	41.5	41.7	41.7
	important	91	51.7	52.0	93.7
	neither important nor unimportant	10	5.7	5.7	99.4
	unimportant	1	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

What skills do you need (make decisions)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely important	80	45.5	45.7	45.7
	important	85	48.3	48.6	94.3
	neither important nor unimportant	8	4.5	4.6	98.9
	unimportant	2	1.1	1.1	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

How good are your skills (figure work)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very adequately skilled	27	15.3	15.4	15.4
	adequately skilled	99	56.3	56.6	72.0
	neither adequate nor inadequate	43	24.4	24.6	96.6
	inadequately skilled	6	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

How good are your skills (Build cust rels)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very adequately skilled	47	26.7	26.9	26.9
	adequately skilled	109	61.9	62.3	89.1
	neither adequate nor inadequate	17	9.7	9.7	98.9
	inadequately skilled	2	1.1	1.1	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very adequately skilled	34	19.3	19.4	19.4
	adequately skilled	93	52.8	53.1	72.6
	neither adequate nor inadequate	44	25.0	25.1	97.7
	inadequately skilled	4	2.3	2.3	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very adequately skilled	52	29.5	29.7	29.7
	adequately skilled	96	54.5	54.9	84.6
	neither adequate nor inadequate	24	13.6	13.7	98.3
	inadequately skilled	3	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very adequately skilled	45	25.6	25.7	25.7
	adequately skilled	83	47.2	47.4	73.1
	neither adequate nor inadequate	43	24.4	24.6	97.7
	inadequately skilled	4	2.3	2.3	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very adequately skilled	51	29.0	29.1	29.1
	adequately skilled	86	48.9	49.1	78.3
	neither adequate nor inadequate	32	18.2	18.3	96.6
	inadequately skilled	5	2.8	2.9	99.4
	very inadequately skilled	1	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

How good are your skills (ability to manage business)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very adequately skilled	58	33.0	33.1	33.1
	adequately skilled	93	52.8	53.1	86.3
	neither adequate nor inadequate	24	13.6	13.7	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very adequately skilled	65	36.9	37.1	37.1
	adequately skilled	92	52.3	52.6	89.7
	neither adequate nor inadequate	18	10.2	10.3	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Who is consulted when business advice required

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	relatives outside the business	9	5.1	5.1	5.1
	relatives within the business	15	8.5	8.6	13.7
	staff	8	4.5	4.6	18.3
	accountant	80	45.5	45.7	64.0
	bank manager	48	27.3	27.4	91.4
	Business Link	14	8.0	8.0	99.4
	other	1	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Should there be special training for OMs of PBs

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	no	43	24.4	24.6	24.6
	yes	132	75.0	75.4	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

What form should the training for OMs of PBs take

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	evening classes	66	37.5	50.4	50.4
	day-release	23	13.1	17.6	67.9
	distance learning	30	17.0	22.9	90.8
	vocational/on-the-job (e.g. NVQ)	10	5.7	7.6	98.5
	Other	2	1.1	1.5	100.0
	Total	131	74.4	100.0	
Missing	System	45	25.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Will you take any managerial training in the future

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes, definitely	3	1.7	1.7	1.7
	possibly	14	8.0	8.0	9.7
	unsure at present	67	38.1	38.3	48.0
	definitely not	91	51.7	52.0	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

How successful is your business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very successful	32	18.2	18.3	18.3
	successful	104	59.1	59.4	77.7
	neither successful nor unsuccessful	39	22.2	22.3	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Current rate of sales growth v last years sales

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	annual sales declined by more than 10%	7	4.0	4.0	4.0
	annual sales declined by 1 - 10%	23	13.1	13.1	17.1
	annual sales unchanged	55	31.3	31.4	48.6
	annual sales increased by 1 - 10%	71	40.3	40.6	89.1
	annual sales increased by more than 10%	19	10.8	10.9	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

'firm owned how long'

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-18 months	46	26.1	26.3	26.3
	19-36 months	87	49.4	49.7	76.0
	3 years or over	42	23.9	24.0	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

'firm bought where'

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	estate agents	114	64.8	65.1	65.1
	private sale	61	34.7	34.9	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

'firm owned by who'

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	self only	48	27.3	27.4	27.4
	self & business partner (inc spouse etc)	127	72.2	72.6	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

occupation prior to buying business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	full time employment	88	50.0	50.3	50.3
	part time employment	25	14.2	14.3	64.6
	full time/part time education	12	6.8	6.9	71.4
	self employed	50	28.4	28.6	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

occupation prior to buying business (co-own)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	full time employment	41	23.3	32.0	32.0
	part time employment	33	18.8	25.8	57.8
	full time/part time education	17	9.7	13.3	71.1
	self employed	37	21.0	28.9	100.0
	Total	128	72.7	100.0	
Missing	System	48	27.3		
Total		176	100.0		

Why buy the business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Identified good business opportunity	68	38.6	38.9	38.9
	Need for independence/desire to control future	72	40.9	41.1	80.0
	no alternative employment/personal circumstances (health, ag	35	19.9	20.0	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6	A58	
Total		176	100.0		

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16-35	23	13.1	13.1	13.1
	36-55	125	71.0	71.4	84.6
	56 or over	27	15.3	15.4	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Age (co-own)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16-35	18	10.2	14.3	14.3
	36-55	92	52.3	73.0	87.3
	56 or over	16	9.1	12.7	100.0
	Total	126	71.6	100.0	
Missing	System	50	28.4		
Total		176	100.0		

Edu & quals

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	none	23	13.1	13.1	13.1
	GCSEs/A levels	74	42.0	42.3	55.4
	Professional qualification (deg/dip etc)	78	44.3	44.6	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Edu & quals (co-own)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	none	25	14.2	19.8	19.8
	GCSEs/A levels	58	33.0	46.0	65.9
	Professional qualification (deg/dip etc)	43	24.4	34.1	100.0
	Total	126	71.6	100.0	
Missing	System	50	28.4		
Total		176	100.0		

how much paid for business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-25,000	37	21.0	21.1	21.1
	26,000-50,000	52	29.5	29.7	50.9
	51,000-100,000	56	31.8	32.0	82.9
	100,000 plus	30	17.0	17.1	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

How was the business funded

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bank loan or similar	126	71.6	72.0	72.0
	personal savings	49	27.8	28.0	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Business type

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	retail services	64	36.4	36.6	36.6
	professional services	44	25.0	25.1	61.7
	tourism	67	38.1	38.3	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

employee numbers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	none	64	36.4	36.6	36.6
	1-10	111	63.1	63.4	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

overall

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	OVERALL	176	100.0	100.0	100.0

length of time owned

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0 - 2 years	46	26.1	26.3	26.3
	2 years or over	129	73.3	73.7	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Training type

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	technical	20	11.4	55.6	55.6
	managerial or managerial & technical	16	9.1	44.4	100.0
	Total	36	20.5	100.0	
Missing	System	140	79.5		
Total		176	100.0		

academic status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	no formal qualifications	23	13.1	13.1	13.1
	GCSEs or above	152	86.4	86.9	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

future training

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	definitely	3	1.7	1.7	1.7
	possibly, unsure	81	46.0	46.3	48.0
	at present				
	definitely not	91	51.7	52.0	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16-30	23	13.1	13.1	13.1
	31-40	64	36.4	36.6	49.7
	41-50	61	34.7	34.9	84.6
	51+	27	15.3	15.4	100.0
	Total	175	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		176	100.0		

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
previous occupation * Business type	350	99.4%	2	.6%	352	100.0%

previous occupation * Business type Crosstabulation

			Business type	
			retail services	professional services
previous occupation	FT employment same industry as business	Count	20	13
		Expected Count	21.1	12.7
		% within previous occupation	32.8%	21.3%
		% within Business type	16.5%	17.8%
		% of Total	5.7%	3.7%
	FT employment different industry as business	Count	38	20
		Expected Count	39.8	24.0
		% within previous occupation	33.0%	17.4%
		% within Business type	31.4%	27.4%
		% of Total	10.9%	5.7%
	FT or PT education	Count	23	16
		Expected Count	22.8	13.8
		% within previous occupation	34.8%	24.2%
		% within Business type	19.0%	21.9%
		% of Total	6.6%	4.6%
	unemployed	Count	8	7
		Expected Count	8.3	5.0
		% within previous occupation	33.3%	29.2%
		% within Business type	6.6%	9.6%
		% of Total	2.3%	2.0%
	self employed	Count	14	6
		Expected Count	8.6	5.2
		% within previous occupation	56.0%	24.0%
		% within Business type	11.6%	8.2%
		% of Total	4.0%	1.7%
	other	Count	18	11
		Expected Count	20.4	12.3
		% within previous occupation	30.5%	18.6%
		% within Business type	14.9%	15.1%
		% of Total	5.1%	3.1%
Total	Count	121	73	
	Expected Count	121.0	73.0	
	% within previous occupation	34.6%	20.9%	
	% within Business type	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	34.6%	20.9%	

previous occupation * Business type Crosstabulation

			Business	Total
			tourism	
previous occupation	FT employment same industry as business	Count	28	61
		Expected Count	27.2	61.0
		% within previous occupation	45.9%	100.0%
		% within Business type	17.9%	17.4%
		% of Total	8.0%	17.4%
	FT employment different industry as business	Count	57	115
		Expected Count	51.3	115.0
		% within previous occupation	49.6%	100.0%
		% within Business type	36.5%	32.9%
		% of Total	16.3%	32.9%
	FT or PT education	Count	27	66
		Expected Count	29.4	66.0
		% within previous occupation	40.9%	100.0%
		% within Business type	17.3%	18.9%
		% of Total	7.7%	18.9%
	unemployed	Count	9	24
		Expected Count	10.7	24.0
		% within previous occupation	37.5%	100.0%
		% within Business type	5.8%	6.9%
		% of Total	2.6%	6.9%
	self employed	Count	5	25
		Expected Count	11.1	25.0
		% within previous occupation	20.0%	100.0%
		% within Business type	3.2%	7.1%
		% of Total	1.4%	7.1%
	other	Count	30	59
		Expected Count	26.3	59.0
		% within previous occupation	50.8%	100.0%
		% within Business type	19.2%	16.9%
		% of Total	8.6%	16.9%
Total		Count	156	350
		Expected Count	156.0	350.0
		% within previous occupation	44.6%	100.0%
		% within Business type	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	44.6%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.874 ^a	10	.367
Likelihood Ratio	11.152	10	.346
Linear-by-Linear Association	.381	1	.537
N of Valid Cases	350		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.01.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Training taken * Business type	350	99.4%	2	.6%	352	100.0%

Training taken * Business type Crosstabulation

			Business type			Total
			retail services	professional services	tourism	
Training taken	Yes	Count	10	15	29	54
		Expected Count	18.7	11.3	24.1	54.0
		% within Training taken	18.5%	27.8%	53.7%	100.0%
		% within Business type	8.3%	20.5%	18.6%	15.4%
		% of Total	2.9%	4.3%	8.3%	15.4%
	No	Count	111	58	127	296
		Expected Count	102.3	61.7	131.9	296.0
		% within Training taken	37.5%	19.6%	42.9%	100.0%
		% within Business type	91.7%	79.5%	81.4%	84.6%
		% of Total	31.7%	16.6%	36.3%	84.6%
Total	Count		121	73	156	350
	Expected Count		121.0	73.0	156.0	350.0
	% within Training taken		34.6%	20.9%	44.6%	100.0%
	% within Business type		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total		34.6%	20.9%	44.6%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.420 ^a	2	.024
Likelihood Ratio	8.054	2	.018
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.168	1	.023
N of Valid Cases	350		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 11.26.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
future training * Business type	350	99.4%	2	.6%	352	100.0%

future training * Business type Crosstabulation

			Business type			Total
			retail services	professional services	tourism	
future training	definitely	Count	0	0	8	8
		Expected Count	2.8	1.7	3.6	8.0
		% within future training	.0%	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% within Business type	.0%	.0%	5.1%	2.3%
		% of Total	.0%	.0%	2.3%	2.3%
	possibly, unsure at present	Count	54	41	68	163
		Expected Count	56.4	34.0	72.7	163.0
		% within future training	33.1%	25.2%	41.7%	100.0%
		% within Business type	44.6%	56.2%	43.6%	46.6%
		% of Total	15.4%	11.7%	19.4%	46.6%
	definitely not	Count	67	32	80	179
		Expected Count	61.9	37.3	79.8	179.0
		% within future training	37.4%	17.9%	44.7%	100.0%
		% within Business type	55.4%	43.8%	51.3%	51.1%
		% of Total	19.1%	9.1%	22.9%	51.1%
	Total	Count	121	73	156	350
		Expected Count	121.0	73.0	156.0	350.0
		% within future training	34.6%	20.9%	44.6%	100.0%
		% within Business type	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	34.6%	20.9%	44.6%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.973 ^a	4	.011
Likelihood Ratio	15.899	4	.003
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.806	1	.179
N of Valid Cases	350		

a. 3 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.67.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Training taken * age	350	99.4%	2	.6%	352	100.0%

Training taken * age Crosstabulation

			age				Total
			16-30	31-40	41-50	51+	
Training taken	Yes	Count	10	15	20	9	54
		Expected Count	6.6	22.5	18.8	6.0	54.0
		% within Training taken	18.5%	27.8%	37.0%	16.7%	100.0%
		% within age	23.3%	10.3%	16.4%	23.1%	15.4%
		% of Total	2.9%	4.3%	5.7%	2.6%	15.4%
	No	Count	33	131	102	30	296
		Expected Count	36.4	123.5	103.2	33.0	296.0
		% within Training taken	11.1%	44.3%	34.5%	10.1%	100.0%
		% within age	76.7%	89.7%	83.6%	76.9%	84.6%
		% of Total	9.4%	37.4%	29.1%	8.6%	84.6%
Total		Count	43	146	122	39	350
		Expected Count	43.0	146.0	122.0	39.0	350.0
		% within Training taken	12.3%	41.7%	34.9%	11.1%	100.0%
		% within age	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	12.3%	41.7%	34.9%	11.1%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.827 ^a	3	.078
Likelihood Ratio	6.745	3	.080
Linear-by-Linear Association	.435	1	.509
N of Valid Cases	350		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.02.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
future training * age	350	99.4%	2	.6%	352	100.0%

future training * age Crosstabulation

			age				Total
			16-30	31-40	41-50	51+	
future training	definitely	Count	3	1	4	0	8
		Expected Count	1.0	3.3	2.8	.9	8.0
		% within future training	37.5%	12.5%	50.0%	.0%	100.0%
		% within age	7.0%	.7%	3.3%	.0%	2.3%
		% of Total	.9%	.3%	1.1%	.0%	2.3%
	possibly, unsure at present	Count	23	74	57	9	163
		Expected Count	20.0	68.0	56.8	18.2	163.0
		% within future training	14.1%	45.4%	35.0%	5.5%	100.0%
		% within age	53.5%	50.7%	46.7%	23.1%	46.6%
		% of Total	6.6%	21.1%	16.3%	2.6%	46.6%
	definitely not	Count	17	71	61	30	179
		Expected Count	22.0	74.7	62.4	19.9	179.0
		% within future training	9.5%	39.7%	34.1%	16.8%	100.0%
		% within age	39.5%	48.6%	50.0%	76.9%	51.1%
		% of Total	4.9%	20.3%	17.4%	8.6%	51.1%
Total		Count	43	146	122	39	350
		Expected Count	43.0	146.0	122.0	39.0	350.0
		% within future training	12.3%	41.7%	34.9%	11.1%	100.0%
		% within age	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	12.3%	41.7%	34.9%	11.1%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	19.202 ^a	6	.004
Likelihood Ratio	19.623	6	.003
Linear-by-Linear Association	9.308	1	.002
N of Valid Cases	350		

a. 4 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .89.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Training taken * 'firm owned by who'	348	98.9%	4	1.1%	352	100.0%

Training taken * 'firm owned by who' Crosstabulation

			'firm owned by who'		Total
			self only	self & business partner (inc spouse etc)	
Training taken	Yes	Count	21	33	54
		Expected Count	14.7	39.3	54.0
		% within Training taken	38.9%	61.1%	100.0%
		% within 'firm owned by who'	22.1%	13.0%	15.5%
		% of Total	6.0%	9.5%	15.5%
	No	Count	74	220	294
		Expected Count	80.3	213.7	294.0
		% within Training taken	25.2%	74.8%	100.0%
		% within 'firm owned by who'	77.9%	87.0%	84.5%
		% of Total	21.3%	63.2%	84.5%
Total	Count		95	253	348
	Expected Count		95.0	253.0	348.0
	% within Training taken		27.3%	72.7%	100.0%
	% within 'firm owned by who'		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total		27.3%	72.7%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.326 ^b	1	.038	.046	.030
Continuity Correction ^a	3.663	1	.056		
Likelihood Ratio	4.083	1	.043		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.314	1	.038		
N of Valid Cases	348				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 14.74.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
future training * 'firm owned by who'	348	98.9%	4	1.1%	352	100.0%

future training * 'firm owned by who' Crosstabulation

			'firm owned by who'		Total
			self only	self & business partner (inc spouse etc)	
future training	definitely	Count	0	8	8
		Expected Count	2.2	5.8	8.0
		% within future training	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% within 'firm owned by who'	.0%	3.2%	2.3%
		% of Total	.0%	2.3%	2.3%
	possibly, unsure at present	Count	53	108	161
		Expected Count	44.0	117.0	161.0
		% within future training	32.9%	67.1%	100.0%
		% within 'firm owned by who'	55.8%	42.7%	46.3%
		% of Total	15.2%	31.0%	46.3%
	definitely not	Count	42	137	179
		Expected Count	48.9	130.1	179.0
		% within future training	23.5%	76.5%	100.0%
		% within 'firm owned by who'	44.2%	54.2%	51.4%
		% of Total	12.1%	39.4%	51.4%
	Total	Count	95	253	348
		Expected Count	95.0	253.0	348.0
		% within future training	27.3%	72.7%	100.0%
		% within 'firm owned by who'	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	27.3%	72.7%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.893 ^a	2	.032
Likelihood Ratio	8.935	2	.011
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.069	1	.301
N of Valid Cases	348		

a. 1 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.18.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Training taken * employee numbers	350	99.4%	2	.6%	352	100.0%

Training taken * employee numbers Crosstabulation

			employee numbers		Total
			none	1-10	
Training taken	Yes	Count	31	23	54
		Expected Count	21.6	32.4	54.0
		% within Training taken	57.4%	42.6%	100.0%
		% within employee numbers	22.1%	11.0%	15.4%
		% of Total	8.9%	6.6%	15.4%
	No	Count	109	187	296
		Expected Count	118.4	177.6	296.0
		% within Training taken	36.8%	63.2%	100.0%
		% within employee numbers	77.9%	89.0%	84.6%
		% of Total	31.1%	53.4%	84.6%
Total		Count	140	210	350
		Expected Count	140.0	210.0	350.0
		% within Training taken	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%
		% within employee numbers	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.062 ^b	1	.005	.006	.004
Continuity Correction ^a	7.227	1	.007		
Likelihood Ratio	7.893	1	.005		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.039	1	.005		
N of Valid Cases	350				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 21.60.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Training taken * employee numbers	350	99.4%	2	.6%	352	100.0%

Training taken * employee numbers Crosstabulation

			employee numbers		Total
			none	1-10	
Training taken	Yes	Count	31	23	54
		Expected Count	21.6	32.4	54.0
		% within Training taken	57.4%	42.6%	100.0%
		% within employee numbers	22.1%	11.0%	15.4%
		% of Total	8.9%	6.6%	15.4%
	No	Count	109	187	296
		Expected Count	118.4	177.6	296.0
		% within Training taken	36.8%	63.2%	100.0%
		% within employee numbers	77.9%	89.0%	84.6%
		% of Total	31.1%	53.4%	84.6%
Total		Count	140	210	350
		Expected Count	140.0	210.0	350.0
		% within Training taken	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%
		% within employee numbers	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.062 ^b	1	.005	.006	.004
Continuity Correction ^a	7.227	1	.007		
Likelihood Ratio	7.893	1	.005		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.039	1	.005		
N of Valid Cases	350				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 21.60.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
future training * employee numbers	350	99.4%	2	.6%	352	100.0%

future training * employee numbers Crosstabulation

			employee numbers		Total
			none	1-10	
future training	definitely	Count	2	6	8
		Expected Count	3.2	4.8	8.0
		% within future training	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%
		% within employee numbers	1.4%	2.9%	2.3%
		% of Total	.6%	1.7%	2.3%
	possibly, unsure at present	Count	66	97	163
		Expected Count	65.2	97.8	163.0
		% within future training	40.5%	59.5%	100.0%
		% within employee numbers	47.1%	46.2%	46.6%
		% of Total	18.9%	27.7%	46.6%
	definitely not	Count	72	107	179
		Expected Count	71.6	107.4	179.0
		% within future training	40.2%	59.8%	100.0%
		% within employee numbers	51.4%	51.0%	51.1%
		% of Total	20.6%	30.6%	51.1%
	Total	Count	140	210	350
		Expected Count	140.0	210.0	350.0
		% within future training	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%
		% within employee numbers	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.770 ^a	2	.680
Likelihood Ratio	.818	2	.664
Linear-by-Linear Association	.103	1	.748
N of Valid Cases	350		

a. 2 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.20.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Training taken * Is this the first business owned	350	99.4%	2	.6%	352	100.0%

Training taken * Is this the first business owned Crosstabulation

			Is this the first business owned		Total
			yes	no	
Training taken	Yes	Count	34	20	54
		Expected Count	38.4	15.6	54.0
		% within Training taken	63.0%	37.0%	100.0%
		% within Is this the first business owned	13.7%	19.8%	15.4%
		% of Total	9.7%	5.7%	15.4%
	No	Count	215	81	296
		Expected Count	210.6	85.4	296.0
		% within Training taken	72.6%	27.4%	100.0%
		% within Is this the first business owned	86.3%	80.2%	84.6%
		% of Total	61.4%	23.1%	84.6%
Total	Count		249	101	350
	Expected Count		249.0	101.0	350.0
	% within Training taken		71.1%	28.9%	100.0%
	% within Is this the first business owned		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total		71.1%	28.9%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.081 ^b	1	.149	.191	.102
Continuity Correction ^a	1.637	1	.201		
Likelihood Ratio	2.001	1	.157		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.075	1	.150		
N of Valid Cases	350				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 15.58.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
future training * Is this the first business owned	350	99.4%	2	.6%	352	100.0%

future training * Is this the first business owned Crosstabulation

			Is this the first business owned		Total
			yes	no	
future training	definitely	Count	7	1	8
		Expected Count	5.7	2.3	8.0
		% within future training	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
		% within Is this the first business owned	2.8%	1.0%	2.3%
		% of Total	2.0%	.3%	2.3%
	possibly, unsure at present	Count	121	42	163
		Expected Count	116.0	47.0	163.0
		% within future training	74.2%	25.8%	100.0%
		% within Is this the first business owned	48.6%	41.6%	46.6%
		% of Total	34.6%	12.0%	46.6%
	definitely not	Count	121	58	179
		Expected Count	127.3	51.7	179.0
		% within future training	67.6%	32.4%	100.0%
		% within Is this the first business owned	48.6%	57.4%	51.1%
		% of Total	34.6%	16.6%	51.1%
Total		Count	249	101	350
		Expected Count	249.0	101.0	350.0
		% within future training	71.1%	28.9%	100.0%
		% within Is this the first business owned	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	71.1%	28.9%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.897 ^a	2	.235
Likelihood Ratio	3.071	2	.215
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.751	1	.097
N of Valid Cases	350		

a. 1 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.31.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Training taken * academic status	350	99.4%	2	.6%	352	100.0%

Training taken * academic status Crosstabulation

			academic status		Total
			no formal qualifications	GCSEs or above	
Training taken	Yes	Count	8	46	54
		Expected Count	8.5	45.5	54.0
		% within Training taken	14.8%	85.2%	100.0%
		% within academic status	14.5%	15.6%	15.4%
		% of Total	2.3%	13.1%	15.4%
	No	Count	47	249	296
		Expected Count	46.5	249.5	296.0
		% within Training taken	15.9%	84.1%	100.0%
		% within academic status	85.5%	84.4%	84.6%
		% of Total	13.4%	71.1%	84.6%
Total	Count		55	295	350
	Expected Count		55.0	295.0	350.0
	% within Training taken		15.7%	84.3%	100.0%
	% within academic status		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total		15.7%	84.3%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.039 ^b	1	.843	1.000	.515
Continuity Correction ^a	.000	1	1.000		
Likelihood Ratio	.040	1	.842		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	.039	1	.844		
N of Valid Cases	350				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.49.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
future training * academic status	350	99.4%	2	.6%	352	100.0%

future training * academic status Crosstabulation

			academic status		Total
			no formal qualifications	GCSEs or above	
future training	definitely	Count	0	8	8
		Expected Count	1.3	6.7	8.0
		% within future training	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% within academic status	.0%	2.7%	2.3%
		% of Total	.0%	2.3%	2.3%
	possibly, unsure at present	Count	25	138	163
		Expected Count	25.6	137.4	163.0
		% within future training	15.3%	84.7%	100.0%
		% within academic status	45.5%	46.8%	46.6%
		% of Total	7.1%	39.4%	46.6%
	definitely not	Count	30	149	179
		Expected Count	28.1	150.9	179.0
		% within future training	16.8%	83.2%	100.0%
		% within academic status	54.5%	50.5%	51.1%
		% of Total	8.6%	42.6%	51.1%
	Total	Count	55	295	350
		Expected Count	55.0	295.0	350.0
		% within future training	15.7%	84.3%	100.0%
		% within academic status	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	15.7%	84.3%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.657 ^a	2	.437
Likelihood Ratio	2.898	2	.235
Linear-by-Linear Association	.712	1	.399
N of Valid Cases	350		

a. 1 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.26.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Training taken * How successful is your business	350	99.4%	2	.6%	352	100.0%

Training taken * How successful is your business Crosstabulation

			How successful is your business			Total
			very successful	successful	neither successful nor unsuccessful	
Training taken	Yes	Count	13	37	4	54
		Expected Count	11.1	34.6	8.3	54.0
		% within Training taken	24.1%	68.5%	7.4%	100.0%
		% within How successful is your business	18.1%	16.5%	7.4%	15.4%
		% of Total	3.7%	10.6%	1.1%	15.4%
	No	Count	59	187	50	296
		Expected Count	60.9	189.4	45.7	296.0
		% within Training taken	19.9%	63.2%	16.9%	100.0%
		% within How successful is your business	81.9%	83.5%	92.6%	84.6%
		% of Total	16.9%	53.4%	14.3%	84.6%
Total		Count	72	224	54	350
		Expected Count	72.0	224.0	54.0	350.0
		% within Training taken	20.6%	64.0%	15.4%	100.0%
		% within How successful is your business	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	20.6%	64.0%	15.4%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.247 ^a	2	.197
Likelihood Ratio	3.756	2	.153
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.366	1	.124
N of Valid Cases	350		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.33.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Training taken * How successful is your business	350	99.4%	2	.6%	352	100.0%

Training taken * How successful is your business Crosstabulation

			How successful is your business			Total
			very successful	successful	neither successful nor unsuccessful	
Training taken	Yes	Count	13	37	4	54
		Expected Count	11.1	34.6	8.3	54.0
		% within Training taken	24.1%	68.5%	7.4%	100.0%
		% within How successful is your business	18.1%	16.5%	7.4%	15.4%
		% of Total	3.7%	10.6%	1.1%	15.4%
	No	Count	59	187	50	296
		Expected Count	60.9	189.4	45.7	296.0
		% within Training taken	19.9%	63.2%	16.9%	100.0%
		% within How successful is your business	81.9%	83.5%	92.6%	84.6%
		% of Total	16.9%	53.4%	14.3%	84.6%
Total		Count	72	224	54	350
		Expected Count	72.0	224.0	54.0	350.0
		% within Training taken	20.6%	64.0%	15.4%	100.0%
		% within How successful is your business	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	20.6%	64.0%	15.4%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.247 ^a	2	.197
Likelihood Ratio	3.756	2	.153
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.366	1	.124
N of Valid Cases	350		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.33.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Training taken * Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	350	99.4%	2	.6%	352	100.0%

Training taken * Current rate of sales growth v last years sales Crosstabulation

			Current rate of sales growth v last years sales			
			annual sales declined by more than 10%	annual sales declined by 1 - 10%	annual sales unchanged	annual sales increased by 1 - 10%
Training taken	Yes	Count	0	6	25	20
		Expected Count	1.2	4.0	21.4	20.2
		% within Training taken	.0%	11.1%	46.3%	37.0%
		% within Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	.0%	23.1%	18.0%	15.3%
		% of Total	.0%	1.7%	7.1%	5.7%
	No	Count	8	20	114	111
		Expected Count	6.8	22.0	117.6	110.8
		% within Training taken	2.7%	6.8%	38.5%	37.5%
		% within Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	100.0%	76.9%	82.0%	84.7%
		% of Total	2.3%	5.7%	32.6%	31.7%
Total		Count	8	26	139	131
		Expected Count	8.0	26.0	139.0	131.0
		% within Training taken	2.3%	7.4%	39.7%	37.4%
		% within Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	2.3%	7.4%	39.7%	37.4%

Training taken * Current rate of sales growth v last years sales Crosstabulation

			Current rate	Total
			annual sales increased by more than 10%	
Training taken	Yes	Count	3	54
		Expected Count	7.1	54.0
		% within Training taken	5.6%	100.0%
		% within Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	6.5%	15.4%
		% of Total	.9%	15.4%
	No	Count	43	296
		Expected Count	38.9	296.0
		% within Training taken	14.5%	100.0%
		% within Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	93.5%	84.6%
		% of Total	12.3%	84.6%
Total		Count	46	350
		Expected Count	46.0	350.0
		% within Training taken	13.1%	100.0%
		% within Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	13.1%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.121 ^a	4	.190
Likelihood Ratio	7.836	4	.098
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.718	1	.190
N of Valid Cases	350		

a. 2 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.23.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
future training * previous occupation	350	99.4%	2	.6%	352	100.0%

future training * previous occupation Crosstabulation

			previous occupation			
			FT employment same industry as business	FT employment different industry as business	FT or PT education	unemployed
future training	definitely	Count	3	3	0	0
		Expected Count	1.4	2.6	1.5	.5
		% within future training	37.5%	37.5%	.0%	.0%
		% within previous occupation	4.9%	2.6%	.0%	.0%
		% of Total	.9%	.9%	.0%	.0%
	possibly, unsure at present	Count	31	55	28	10
		Expected Count	28.4	53.6	30.7	11.2
		% within future training	19.0%	33.7%	17.2%	6.1%
		% within previous occupation	50.8%	47.8%	42.4%	41.7%
		% of Total	8.9%	15.7%	8.0%	2.9%
	definitely not	Count	27	57	38	14
		Expected Count	31.2	58.8	33.8	12.3
		% within future training	15.1%	31.8%	21.2%	7.8%
		% within previous occupation	44.3%	49.6%	57.6%	58.3%
		% of Total	7.7%	16.3%	10.9%	4.0%
	Total	Count	61	115	66	24
		Expected Count	61.0	115.0	66.0	24.0
		% within future training	17.4%	32.9%	18.9%	6.9%
		% within previous occupation	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	17.4%	32.9%	18.9%	6.9%

future training * previous occupation Crosstabulation

			previous occupation		Total
			self employed	other	
future training	definitely	Count	0	2	8
		Expected Count	.6	1.3	8.0
		% within future training	.0%	25.0%	100.0%
		% within previous occupation	.0%	3.4%	2.3%
		% of Total	.0%	.6%	2.3%
	possibly, unsure at present	Count	11	28	163
		Expected Count	11.6	27.5	163.0
		% within future training	6.7%	17.2%	100.0%
		% within previous occupation	44.0%	47.5%	46.6%
		% of Total	3.1%	8.0%	46.6%
	definitely not	Count	14	29	179
		Expected Count	12.8	30.2	179.0
		% within future training	7.8%	16.2%	100.0%
		% within previous occupation	56.0%	49.2%	51.1%
		% of Total	4.0%	8.3%	51.1%
	Total	Count	25	59	350
		Expected Count	25.0	59.0	350.0
		% within future training	7.1%	16.9%	100.0%
		% within previous occupation	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	7.1%	16.9%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.092 ^a	10	.717
Likelihood Ratio	9.212	10	.512
Linear-by-Linear Association	.667	1	.414
N of Valid Cases	350		

a. 6 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .55.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Training taken * previous occupation	350	99.4%	2	.6%	352	100.0%

Training taken * previous occupation Crosstabulation

			previous occupation			
			FT employment same industry as business	FT employment different industry as business	FT or PT education	unemployed
Training taken	Yes	Count	10	20	10	2
		Expected Count	9.4	17.7	10.2	3.7
		% within Training taken	18.5%	37.0%	18.5%	3.7%
		% within previous occupation	16.4%	17.4%	15.2%	8.3%
		% of Total	2.9%	5.7%	2.9%	.6%
	No	Count	51	95	56	22
		Expected Count	51.6	97.3	55.8	20.3
		% within Training taken	17.2%	32.1%	18.9%	7.4%
		% within previous occupation	83.6%	82.6%	84.8%	91.7%
		% of Total	14.6%	27.1%	16.0%	6.3%
Total	Count	61	115	66	24	
	Expected Count	61.0	115.0	66.0	24.0	
	% within Training taken	17.4%	32.9%	18.9%	6.9%	
	% within previous occupation	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	17.4%	32.9%	18.9%	6.9%	

Training taken * previous occupation Crosstabulation

			previous occupation		Total
			self employed	other	
Training taken	Yes	Count	5	7	54
		Expected Count	3.9	9.1	54.0
		% within Training taken	9.3%	13.0%	100.0%
		% within previous occupation	20.0%	11.9%	15.4%
		% of Total	1.4%	2.0%	15.4%
	No	Count	20	52	296
		Expected Count	21.1	49.9	296.0
		% within Training taken	6.8%	17.6%	100.0%
		% within previous occupation	80.0%	88.1%	84.6%
		% of Total	5.7%	14.9%	84.6%
Total		Count	25	59	350
		Expected Count	25.0	59.0	350.0
		% within Training taken	7.1%	16.9%	100.0%
		% within previous occupation	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	7.1%	16.9%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.288 ^a	5	.808
Likelihood Ratio	2.444	5	.785
Linear-by-Linear Association	.633	1	.426
N of Valid Cases	350		

a. 2 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.70.

Descriptives

business type

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
FT employment same industry as business		61	2.1311	.88460	.11326
FT employment different industry as business		115	2.1652	.89766	.08371
FT or PT education		66	2.0606	.87493	.10770
unemployed		24	2.0417	.85867	.17528
self employed		25	1.6400	.81035	.16207
other		59	2.2034	.88629	.11538
Total		350	2.1000	.88525	.04732
Model	Fixed Effects			.88075	.04708
	Random Effects				.06596

Descriptives

business type

		95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
FT employment same industry as business		1.9046	2.3577	1.00
FT employment different industry as business		1.9994	2.3310	1.00
FT or PT education		1.8455	2.2757	1.00
unemployed		1.6791	2.4043	1.00
self employed		1.3055	1.9745	1.00
other		1.9724	2.4344	1.00
Total		2.0069	2.1931	1.00
Model	Fixed Effects	2.0074	2.1926	
	Random Effects	1.9304	2.2696	

Descriptives

business type

		Maximum	Between-Component Variance
FT employment same industry as business		3.00	
FT employment different industry as business		3.00	
FT or PT education		3.00	
unemployed		3.00	
self employed		3.00	
other		3.00	
Total		3.00	
Model	Fixed Effects		
	Random Effects		A86 .01006

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

business type

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.702	5	344	.623

ANOVA

business type

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6.653	5	1.331	1.715	.130
Within Groups	266.847	344	.776		
Total	273.500	349			

ost Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Business type

Tukey HSD

		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
(I) previous occupation FT employment same industry as business	(J) previous occupation FT employment different industry as business	-.03407	.13951	1.000
	FT or PT education	.07054	.15643	.998
	unemployed	.08948	.21222	.998
	self employed	.49115	.20915	.178
	other	-.07224	.16082	.998
FT employment different industry as business	FT employment same industry as business	.03407	.13951	1.000
	FT or PT education	.10461	.13601	.973
	unemployed	.12355	.19765	.989
	self employed	.52522	.19436	.077
	other	-.03817	.14104	1.000
FT or PT education	FT employment same industry as business	-.07054	.15643	.998
	FT employment different industry as business	-.10461	.13601	.973
	unemployed	.01894	.20994	1.000
	self employed	.42061	.20684	.326
	other	-.14278	.15780	.945
unemployed	FT employment same industry as business	-.08948	.21222	.998
	FT employment different industry as business	-.12355	.19765	.989
	FT or PT education	-.01894	.20994	1.000
	self employed	.40167	.25169	.602
	other	-.16172	.21324	.974
self employed	FT employment same industry as business	-.49115	.20915	.178
	FT employment different industry as business	-.52522	.19436	.077
	FT or PT education	-.42061	.20684	.326
	unemployed	-.40167	.25169	.602
	other	-.56339	.21018	.082
other	FT employment same industry as business	.07224	.16082	.998
	FT employment different industry as business	.03817	.14104	1.000
	FT or PT education	.14278	.15780	.945
	unemployed	.16172	.21324	.974
	self employed	.56339	.21018	.082

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Business type
Tukey HSD

		95% Confidence Interval	
(I) previous occupation	(J) previous occupation	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
FT employment same industry as business	FT employment different industry as business	-.4339	.3657
	FT or PT education	-.3778	.5188
	unemployed	-.5187	.6977
	self employed	-.1083	1.0906
	other	-.5331	.3887
FT employment different industry as business	FT employment same industry as business	-.3657	.4339
	FT or PT education	-.2852	.4944
	unemployed	-.4429	.6900
	self employed	-.0318	1.0822
	other	-.4424	.3660
FT or PT education	FT employment same industry as business	-.5188	.3778
	FT employment different industry as business	-.4944	.2852
	unemployed	-.5827	.6206
	self employed	-.1722	1.0134
	other	-.5950	.3095
unemployed	FT employment same industry as business	-.6977	.5187
	FT employment different industry as business	-.6900	.4429
	FT or PT education	-.6206	.5827
	self employed	-.3197	1.1230
	other	-.7728	.4494
self employed	FT employment same industry as business	-1.0906	.1083
	FT employment different industry as business	-1.0822	.0318
	FT or PT education	-1.0134	.1722
	unemployed	-1.1230	.3197
	other	-1.1657	.0390
other	FT employment same industry as business	-.3887	.5331
	FT employment different industry as business	-.3660	.4424
	FT or PT education	-.3095	.5950
	unemployed	-.4494	.7728
	self employed	-.0390	1.1657

Homogeneous Subsets

Business type

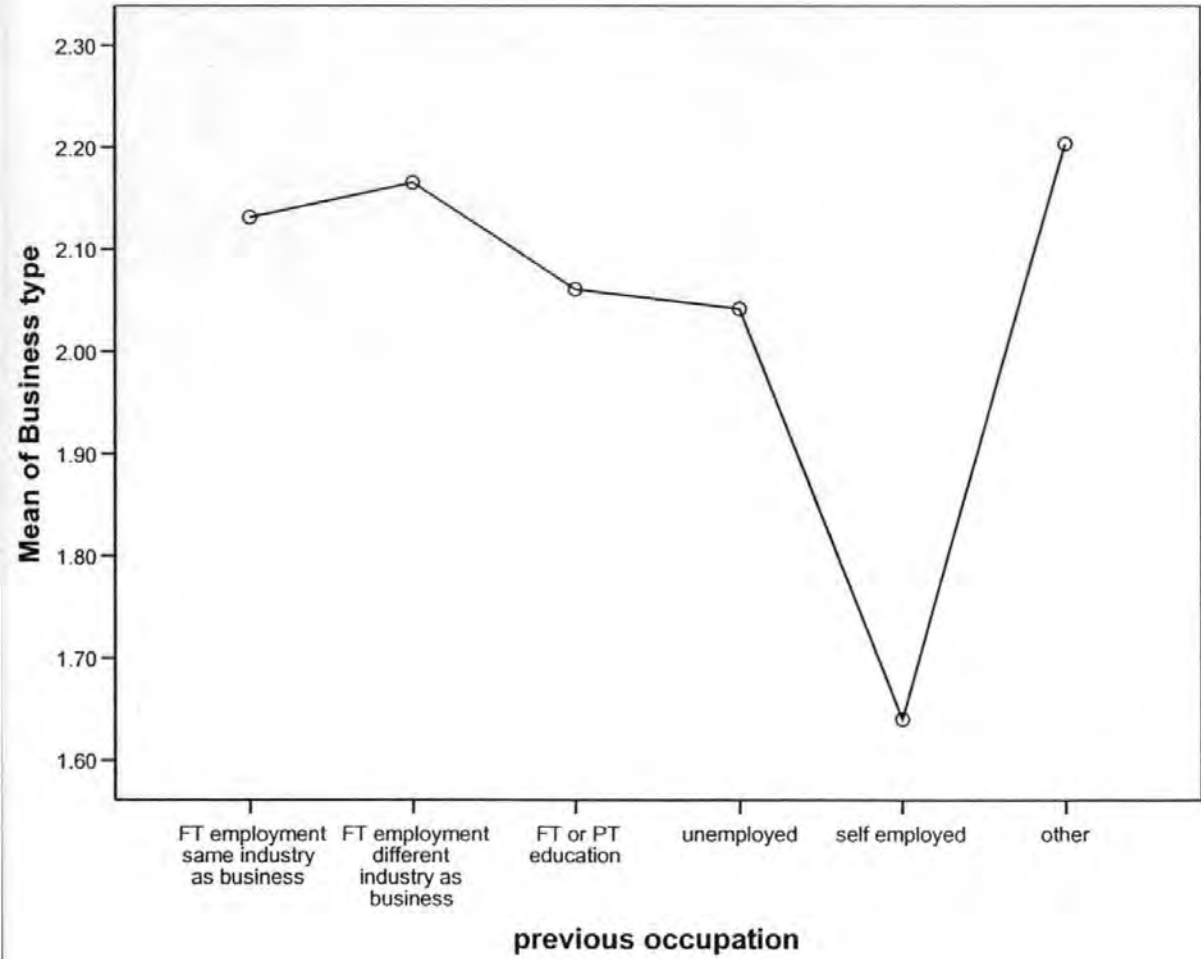
Tukey HSD^{a,b}

previous occupation	N	Subset for alpha = .05	
		1	2
self employed	25	1.6400	
unemployed	24	2.0417	2.0417
FT or PT education	66	2.0606	2.0606
FT employment same industry as business	61	2.1311	2.1311
FT employment different industry as business	115	2.1652	2.1652
other	59		2.2034
Sig.		.065	.957

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

- a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 43.210.
- b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Means Plots



Par Tests

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Kruskal-Wallis Test

Ranks

Business type		N	Mean Rank
Training taken	retail services	121	188.04
	professional services	73	166.54
	tourism	156	169.97
	Total	350	

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Training taken
Chi-Square	7.399
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.025

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Business type

Par Tests

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Kruskal-Wallis Test

Ranks

	Business type	N	Mean Rank
future training	retail services	121	184.69
	professional services	73	164.96
	tourism	156	173.31
	Total	350	

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	future training
Chi-Square	2.434
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.296

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Business type

NPAR TESTS
/K-W=q13 BY j10a(1 3)
/MISSING ANALYSIS.

Par Tests

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Kruskal-Wallis Test

Ranks

	Age	N	Mean Rank
future training	16-35	43	151.64
	36-55	268	172.63
	56 or over	39	221.54
	Total	350	

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	future training
Chi-Square	13.959
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.001

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Age

General Linear Model

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Between-Subjects Factors

		Value Label	N
'firm owned by who'	1.00	self only	95
	2.00	self & business partner (inc spouse etc)	253

Descriptive Statistics

	'firm owned by who'	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Training taken	self only	1.7789	.41716	95
	self & business partner (inc spouse etc)	1.8696	.33745	253
	Total	1.8448	.36259	348
future training	self only	2.4421	.49927	95
	self & business partner (inc spouse etc)	2.5099	.56070	253
	Total	2.4914	.54475	348

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices^a

Box's M	8.383
F	2.771
df1	3
df2	569757.4
Sig.	.040

ests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+j4

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.972	5923.824 ^b	2.000	345.000	.000	.972
	Wilks' Lambda	.028	5923.824 ^b	2.000	345.000	.000	.972
	Hotelling's Trace	34.341	5923.824 ^b	2.000	345.000	.000	.972
	Roy's Largest Root	34.341	5923.824 ^b	2.000	345.000	.000	.972
j4	Pillai's Trace	.015	2.557 ^b	2.000	345.000	.079	.015
	Wilks' Lambda	.985	2.557 ^b	2.000	345.000	.079	.015
	Hotelling's Trace	.015	2.557 ^b	2.000	345.000	.079	.015
	Roy's Largest Root	.015	2.557 ^b	2.000	345.000	.079	.015

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	11847.647	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	11847.647	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	11847.647	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	11847.647	1.000
j4	Pillai's Trace	5.115	.510
	Wilks' Lambda	5.115	.510
	Hotelling's Trace	5.115	.510
	Roy's Largest Root	5.115	.510

a. Computed using alpha = .05

b. Exact statistic

c. Design: Intercept+j4

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Training taken	15.895	1	346	.000
future training	4.071	1	346	.044

ests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+j4

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	Training taken	.567 ^b	1	.567	4.356	.038
	future training	.317 ^c	1	.317	1.069	.302
Intercept	Training taken	919.383	1	919.383	7060.634	.000
	future training	1693.651	1	1693.651	5708.367	.000
j4	Training taken	.567	1	.567	4.356	.038
	future training	.317	1	.317	1.069	.302
Error	Training taken	45.054	346	.130		
	future training	102.657	346	.297		
Total	Training taken	1230.000	348			
	future training	2263.000	348			
Corrected Total	Training taken	45.621	347			
	future training	102.974	347			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Corrected Model	Training taken	.012	4.356	.548
	future training	.003	1.069	.178
Intercept	Training taken	.953	7060.634	1.000
	future training	.943	5708.367	1.000
j4	Training taken	.012	4.356	.548
	future training	.003	1.069	.178
Error	Training taken			
	future training			
Total	Training taken			
	future training			
Corrected Total	Training taken			
	future training			

- a. Computed using alpha = .05
- b. R Squared = .012 (Adjusted R Squared = .010)
- c. R Squared = .003 (Adjusted R Squared = .000)

estimated Marginal Means

'firm owned by who'

Dependent Variable	'firm owned by who'	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Training taken	self only	1.779	.037	1.706	1.852
	self & business partner (inc spouse etc)	1.870	.023	1.825	1.914
future training	self only	2.442	.056	2.332	2.552
	self & business partner (inc spouse etc)	2.510	.034	2.443	2.577

General Linear Model

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Between-Subjects Factors

		Value Label	N
employee	1.00	none	140
numbers	2.00	1-10	210

Descriptive Statistics

employee numbers		Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Training taken	none	1.7786	.41670	140
	1-10	1.8905	.31304	210
	Total	1.8457	.36174	350
future training	none	2.5000	.52969	140
	1-10	2.4810	.55520	210
	Total	2.4886	.54445	350

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices^a

Box's M	14.449
F	4.785
df1	3
df2	4916790
Sig.	.002

ests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+j5

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.977	7300.290 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.977
	Wilks' Lambda	.023	7300.290 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.977
	Hotelling's Trace	42.077	7300.290 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.977
	Roy's Largest Root	42.077	7300.290 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.977
j5	Pillai's Trace	.024	4.245 ^b	2.000	347.000	.015	.024
	Wilks' Lambda	.976	4.245 ^b	2.000	347.000	.015	.024
	Hotelling's Trace	.024	4.245 ^b	2.000	347.000	.015	.024
	Roy's Largest Root	.024	4.245 ^b	2.000	347.000	.015	.024

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	14600.579	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	14600.579	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	14600.579	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	14600.579	1.000
j5	Pillai's Trace	8.490	.642
	Wilks' Lambda	8.490	.642
	Hotelling's Trace	8.490	.642
	Roy's Largest Root	8.490	.642

a. Computed using alpha = .025

b. Exact statistic

c. Design: Intercept+j5

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Training taken	32.800	1	348	.000
future training	.821	.1	348	.366

ests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+j5

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	Training taken	1.052 ^b	1	1.052	8.205	.004
	future training	.030 ^c	1	.030	.103	.749
Intercept	Training taken	1130.800	1	1130.800	8819.990	.000
	future training	2084.030	1	2084.030	7012.337	.000
j5	Training taken	1.052	1	1.052	8.205	.004
	future training	.030	1	.030	.103	.749
Error	Training taken	44.617	348	.128		
	future training	103.424	348	.297		
Total	Training taken	1238.000	350			
	future training	2271.000	350			
Corrected Total	Training taken	45.669	349			
	future training	103.454	349			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Corrected Model	Training taken	.023	8.205	.730
	future training	.000	.103	.033
Intercept	Training taken	.962	8819.990	1.000
	future training	.953	7012.337	1.000
j5	Training taken	.023	8.205	.730
	future training	.000	.103	.033
Error	Training taken			
	future training			
Total	Training taken			
	future training			
Corrected Total	Training taken			
	future training			

- a. Computed using alpha = .025
- b. R Squared = .023 (Adjusted R Squared = .020)
- c. R Squared = .000 (Adjusted R Squared = -.003)

Estimated Marginal Means

employee numbers

Dependent Variable	employee numbers	Mean	Std. Error	97.5% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Training taken	none	1.779	.030	1.710	1.847
	1-10	1.890	.025	1.835	1.946
future training	none	2.500	.046	2.396	2.604
	1-10	2.481	.038	2.396	2.566

General Linear Model

DataSet1] F:\merged data.sav

Between-Subjects Factors

		Value Label	N
Is this the first business owned	1	yes	249
	2	no	101

Descriptive Statistics

Is this the first		Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Training taken	yes	1.8635	.34406	249
	no	1.8020	.40049	101
	Total	1.8457	.36174	350
future training	yes	2.4578	.55288	249
	no	2.5644	.51799	101
	Total	2.4886	.54445	350

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices^a

Box's M	4.093
F	1.353
df1	3
df2	708942.9
Sig.	.255

Tests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+q6

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.973	6222.287 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.973
	Wilks' Lambda	.027	6222.287 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.973
	Hotelling's Trace	35.863	6222.287 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.973
	Roy's Largest Root	35.863	6222.287 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.973
q6	Pillai's Trace	.015	2.641 ^b	2.000	347.000	.073	.015
	Wilks' Lambda	.985	2.641 ^b	2.000	347.000	.073	.015
	Hotelling's Trace	.015	2.641 ^b	2.000	347.000	.073	.015
	Roy's Largest Root	.015	2.641 ^b	2.000	347.000	.073	.015

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	12444.573	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	12444.573	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	12444.573	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	12444.573	1.000
q6	Pillai's Trace	5.281	.411
	Wilks' Lambda	5.281	.411
	Hotelling's Trace	5.281	.411
	Roy's Largest Root	5.281	.411

a. Computed using alpha = .025

b. Exact statistic

c. Design: Intercept+q6

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Training taken	7.835	1	348	.005
future training	2.150	1	348	.143

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+q6

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	Training taken	.272 ^b	1	.272	2.082	.150
	future training	.815 ^c	1	.815	2.765	.097
Intercept	Training taken	965.392	1	965.392	7400.401	.000
	future training	1812.335	1	1812.335	6144.772	.000
q6	Training taken	.272	1	.272	2.082	.150
	future training	.815	1	.815	2.765	.097
Error	Training taken	45.397	348	.130		
	future training	102.639	348	.295		
Total	Training taken	1238.000	350			
	future training	2271.000	350			
Corrected Total	Training taken	45.669	349			
	future training	103.454	349			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Corrected Model	Training taken	.006	2.082	.211
	future training	.008	2.765	.279
Intercept	Training taken	.955	7400.401	1.000
	future training	.946	6144.772	1.000
q6	Training taken	.006	2.082	.211
	future training	.008	2.765	.279
Error	Training taken			
	future training			
Total	Training taken			
	future training			
Corrected Total	Training taken			
	future training			

- a. Computed using alpha = .025
- b. R Squared = .006 (Adjusted R Squared = .003)
- c. R Squared = .008 (Adjusted R Squared = .005)

General Linear Model

DataSet1] F:\merged data.sav

Between-Subjects Factors

		Value Label	N
academic status	1.00	no formal qualifications	55
	2.00	GCSEs or above	295

Descriptive Statistics

academic status		Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Training taken	no formal qualifications	1.8545	.35581	55
	GCSEs or above	1.8441	.36341	295
	Total	1.8457	.36174	350
future training	no formal qualifications	2.5455	.50252	55
	GCSEs or above	2.4780	.55207	295
	Total	2.4886	.54445	350

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices^a

Box's M	.879
F	.289
df1	3
df2	120154.5
Sig.	.833

Tests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+a12

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.959	4060.843 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.959
	Wilks' Lambda	.041	4060.843 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.959
	Hotelling's Trace	23.405	4060.843 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.959
	Roy's Largest Root	23.405	4060.843 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.959
a12	Pillai's Trace	.002	.363 ^b	2.000	347.000	.696	.002
	Wilks' Lambda	.998	.363 ^b	2.000	347.000	.696	.002
	Hotelling's Trace	.002	.363 ^b	2.000	347.000	.696	.002
	Roy's Largest Root	.002	.363 ^b	2.000	347.000	.696	.002

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	8121.686	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	8121.686	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	8121.686	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	8121.686	1.000
a12	Pillai's Trace	.727	.063
	Wilks' Lambda	.727	.063
	Hotelling's Trace	.727	.063
	Roy's Largest Root	.727	.063

a. Computed using alpha = .025

b. Exact statistic

c. Design: Intercept+a12

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Training taken	.158	1	348	.691
future training	2.080	1	348	.150

ests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+a12

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	Training taken	.005 ^b	1	.005	.039	.844
	future training	.211 ^c	1	.211	.712	.399
Intercept	Training taken	634.154	1	634.154	4832.866	.000
	future training	1169.811	1	1169.811	3943.064	.000
a12	Training taken	.005	1	.005	.039	.844
	future training	.211	1	.211	.712	.399
Error	Training taken	45.663	348	.131		
	future training	103.243	348	.297		
Total	Training taken	1238.000	350			
	future training	2271.000	350			
Corrected Total	Training taken	45.669	349			
	future training	103.454	349			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Corrected Model	Training taken	.000	.039	.028
	future training	.002	.712	.082
Intercept	Training taken	.933	4832.866	1.000
	future training	.919	3943.064	1.000
a12	Training taken	.000	.039	.028
	future training	.002	.712	.082
Error	Training taken			
	future training			
Total	Training taken			
	future training			
Corrected Total	Training taken			
	future training			

- a. Computed using alpha = .025
- b. R Squared = .000 (Adjusted R Squared = -.003)
- c. R Squared = .002 (Adjusted R Squared = -.001)

General Linear Model

ataSet2] F:\sapphire.sav

Between-Subjects Factors

	Value Label	N
length of time owned	1.00	46
	2.00	129
	2 years or over	

Descriptive Statistics

	length of time owned	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
What skills do you need (accounting)	0 - 2 years	1.93	.772	46
	2 years or over	1.76	.583	129
	Total	1.81	.641	175
What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	0 - 2 years	1.30	.511	46
	2 years or over	1.40	.565	129
	Total	1.37	.551	175
What skills do you need (rels with supls)	0 - 2 years	2.57	1.311	46
	2 years or over	2.12	1.129	129
	Total	2.23	1.192	175
What skills do you need (know cust needs)	0 - 2 years	1.59	.686	46
	2 years or over	1.64	.716	129
	Total	1.63	.707	175
What skills do you need (recruit staff)	0 - 2 years	1.80	1.067	46
	2 years or over	1.78	.841	129
	Total	1.78	.903	175
What skills do you need (manage staff)	0 - 2 years	1.83	.709	46
	2 years or over	1.73	.747	129
	Total	1.75	.737	175
What skills do you need (manage business)	0 - 2 years	1.76	.603	46
	2 years or over	1.61	.616	129
	Total	1.65	.615	175
What skills do you need (make decisions)	0 - 2 years	1.63	.679	46
	2 years or over	1.60	.618	129
	Total	1.61	.632	175

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices^a

Box's M	62.487
F	1.616
df1	36
df2	25611.619
Sig.	.011

ests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+duration

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.954	427.156 ^b	8.000	166.000	.000	.954
	Wilks' Lambda	.046	427.156 ^b	8.000	166.000	.000	.954
	Hotelling's Trace	20.586	427.156 ^b	8.000	166.000	.000	.954
	Roy's Largest Root	20.586	427.156 ^b	8.000	166.000	.000	.954
duration	Pillai's Trace	.059	1.302 ^b	8.000	166.000	.246	.059
	Wilks' Lambda	.941	1.302 ^b	8.000	166.000	.246	.059
	Hotelling's Trace	.063	1.302 ^b	8.000	166.000	.246	.059
	Roy's Largest Root	.063	1.302 ^b	8.000	166.000	.246	.059

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	3417.245	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	3417.245	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	3417.245	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	3417.245	1.000
duration	Pillai's Trace	10.416	.585
	Wilks' Lambda	10.416	.585
	Hotelling's Trace	10.416	.585
	Roy's Largest Root	10.416	.585

- a. Computed using alpha = .05
- b. Exact statistic
- c. Design: Intercept+duration

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
What skills do you need (accounting)	2.497	1	173	.116
What skills do you need (bid cust rels)	2.925	1	173	.089
What skills do you need (rels with supls)	3.341	1	173	.069
What skills do you need (know cust needs)	.233	1	173	.630
What skills do you need (recruit staff)	3.522	1	173	.062
What skills do you need (manage staff)	.238	1	173	.626
What skills do you need (manage business)	1.197	1	173	.275
What skills do you need (make decisions)	.200	1	173	.655

ests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

- a. Design: Intercept+duration

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	What skills do you need (accounting)	1.040 ^b	1	1.040	2.556	.112
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	.281 ^c	1	.281	.924	.338
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	6.834 ^d	1	6.834	4.915	.028
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	.108 ^e	1	.108	.216	.643
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	.029 ^f	1	.029	.035	.851
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	.322 ^g	1	.322	.591	.443
	What skills do you need (manage business)	.747 ^h	1	.747	1.990	.160
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	.023 ⁱ	1	.023	.056	.813
Intercept	What skills do you need (accounting)	462.822	1	462.822	1138.065	.000
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	247.138	1	247.138	813.196	.000
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	743.154	1	743.154	534.443	.000
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	353.845	1	353.845	705.659	.000
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	434.475	1	434.475	530.371	.000
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	428.482	1	428.482	787.645	.000
	What skills do you need (manage business)	385.845	1	385.845	1027.103	.000
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	354.880	1	354.880	882.676	.000
duration	What skills do you need (accounting)	1.040	1	1.040	2.556	.112
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	.281	1	.281	.924	.338
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	6.834	1	6.834	4.915	.028
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	.108	1	.108	.216	.643
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	.029	1	.029	.035	.851
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	.322	1	.322	.591	.443
	What skills do you need (manage business)	.747	1	.747	1.990	.160
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	.023	1	.023	.056	.813
Error	What skills do you need (accounting)	70.355	173	.407		
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	52.576	173	.304		
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	240.560	173	1.391		
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	86.749	173	.501		
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	141.720	173	.819		
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	94.113	173	.544		
	What skills do you need (manage business)	64.990	173	.376		
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	69.555	173	.402		

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Total	What skills do you need (accounting)	642.000	175			
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	382.000	175			
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	1121.000	175			
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	551.000	175			
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	698.000	175			
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	633.000	175			
	What skills do you need (manage business)	543.000	175			
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	524.000	175			
Corrected Total	What skills do you need (accounting)	71.394	174			
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	52.857	174			
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	247.394	174			
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	86.857	174			
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	141.749	174			
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	94.434	174			
	What skills do you need (manage business)	65.737	174			
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	69.577	174			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Corrected Model	What skills do you need (accounting)	.015	2.556	.356
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	.005	.924	.159
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	.028	4.915	.597
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	.001	.216	.075
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	.000	.035	.054
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	.003	.591	.119
	What skills do you need (manage business)	.011	1.990	.289
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	.000	.056	.056
Intercept	What skills do you need (accounting)	.868	1138.065	1.000
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	.825	813.196	1.000
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	.755	534.443	1.000
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	.803	705.659	1.000
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	.754	530.371	1.000
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	.820	787.645	1.000
	What skills do you need (manage business)	.856	1027.103	1.000
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	.836	882.676	1.000
duration	What skills do you need (accounting)	.015	2.556	.356
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	.005	.924	.159
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	.028	4.915	.597
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	.001	.216	.075
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	.000	.035	.054
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	.003	.591	.119
	What skills do you need (manage business)	.011	1.990	.289
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	.000	.056	.056
Error	What skills do you need (accounting)			
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)			
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)			
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)			
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)			
	What skills do you need (manage staff)			
	What skills do you need (manage business)			
	What skills do you need (make decisions)		A110	

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Total	What skills do you need (accounting) What skills do you need (bld cust rels) What skills do you need (rels with supls) What skills do you need (know cust needs) What skills do you need (recruit staff) What skills do you need (manage staff) What skills do you need (manage business) What skills do you need (make decisions)			
Corrected Total	What skills do you need (accounting) What skills do you need (bld cust rels) What skills do you need (rels with supls) What skills do you need (know cust needs) What skills do you need (recruit staff) What skills do you need (manage staff) What skills do you need (manage business) What skills do you need (make decisions)			

- a. Computed using alpha = .05
- b. R Squared = .015 (Adjusted R Squared = .009)
- c. R Squared = .005 (Adjusted R Squared = .000)
- d. R Squared = .028 (Adjusted R Squared = .022)
- e. R Squared = .001 (Adjusted R Squared = -.005)
- f. R Squared = .000 (Adjusted R Squared = -.006)
- g. R Squared = .003 (Adjusted R Squared = -.002)
- h. R Squared = .011 (Adjusted R Squared = .006)
- i. R Squared = .000 (Adjusted R Squared = -.005)

estimated Marginal Means

length of time owned

Dependent Variable	length of time owned	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
What skills do you need (accounting)	0 - 2 years	1.935	.094	1.749	2.120
	2 years or over	1.760	.056	1.649	1.871
What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	0 - 2 years	1.304	.081	1.144	1.465
	2 years or over	1.395	.049	1.300	1.491
What skills do you need (rels with supls)	0 - 2 years	2.565	.174	2.222	2.908
	2 years or over	2.116	.104	1.911	2.321
What skills do you need (know cust needs)	0 - 2 years	1.587	.104	1.381	1.793
	2 years or over	1.643	.062	1.520	1.766
What skills do you need (recruit staff)	0 - 2 years	1.804	.133	1.541	2.068
	2 years or over	1.775	.080	1.618	1.932
What skills do you need (manage staff)	0 - 2 years	1.826	.109	1.611	2.041
	2 years or over	1.729	.065	1.601	1.857
What skills do you need (manage business)	0 - 2 years	1.761	.090	1.583	1.939
	2 years or over	1.612	.054	1.506	1.719
What skills do you need (make decisions)	0 - 2 years	1.630	.093	1.446	1.815
	2 years or over	1.605	.056	1.494	1.715

General Linear Model

ataSet2] F:\sapphire.sav

Between-Subjects Factors

		Value Label	N
Is this the first business owned	1	yes	109
	2	no	66

Descriptive Statistics

		Is this the first	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
What skills do you need (accounting)	yes		1.81	.659	109
	no		1.80	.613	66
	Total		1.81	.641	175
What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	yes		1.42	.566	109
	no		1.29	.519	66
	Total		1.37	.551	175
What skills do you need (rels with supls)	yes		2.25	1.180	109
	no		2.21	1.222	66
	Total		2.23	1.192	175
What skills do you need (know cust needs)	yes		1.66	.736	109
	no		1.58	.658	66
	Total		1.63	.707	175
What skills do you need (recruit staff)	yes		1.91	.967	109
	no		1.58	.745	66
	Total		1.78	.903	175
What skills do you need (manage staff)	yes		1.85	.780	109
	no		1.59	.632	66
	Total		1.75	.737	175
What skills do you need (manage business)	yes		1.72	.607	109
	no		1.53	.613	66
	Total		1.65	.615	175
What skills do you need (make decisions)	yes		1.61	.679	109
	no		1.61	.551	66
	Total		1.61	.632	175

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices^a

Box's M	53.321
F	1.402
df1	36
df2	64471.740
Sig.	.055

ests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+q6

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.961	505.141 ^b	8.000	166.000	.000	.961
	Wilks' Lambda	.039	505.141 ^b	8.000	166.000	.000	.961
	Hotelling's Trace	24.344	505.141 ^b	8.000	166.000	.000	.961
	Roy's Largest Root	24.344	505.141 ^b	8.000	166.000	.000	.961
q6	Pillai's Trace	.077	1.738 ^b	8.000	166.000	.093	.077
	Wilks' Lambda	.923	1.738 ^b	8.000	166.000	.093	.077
	Hotelling's Trace	.084	1.738 ^b	8.000	166.000	.093	.077
	Roy's Largest Root	.084	1.738 ^b	8.000	166.000	.093	.077

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	4041.125	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	4041.125	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	4041.125	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	4041.125	1.000
q6	Pillai's Trace	13.907	.738
	Wilks' Lambda	13.907	.738
	Hotelling's Trace	13.907	.738
	Roy's Largest Root	13.907	.738

a. Computed using alpha = .05

b. Exact statistic

c. Design: Intercept+q6

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
What skills do you need (accounting)	.001	1	173	.973
What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	5.537	1	173	.020
What skills do you need (rels with supls)	.117	1	173	.732
What skills do you need (know cust needs)	1.605	1	173	.207
What skills do you need (recruit staff)	1.009	1	173	.316
What skills do you need (manage staff)	.714	1	173	.399
What skills do you need (manage business)	.361	1	173	.549
What skills do you need (make decisions)	2.538	1	173	.113

ests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+q6

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	What skills do you need (accounting)	.001 ^b	1	.001	.002	.966
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	.740 ^c	1	.740	2.455	.119
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	.052 ^b	1	.052	.036	.849
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	.296 ^d	1	.296	.591	.443
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	4.545 ^e	1	4.545	5.731	.018
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	2.828 ^f	1	2.828	5.341	.022
	What skills do you need (manage business)	1.555 ^g	1	1.555	4.190	.042
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	.003 ^b	1	.003	.008	.931
Intercept	What skills do you need (accounting)	535.841	1	535.841	1298.443	.000
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	301.883	1	301.883	1002.076	.000
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	817.652	1	817.652	571.895	.000
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	430.558	1	430.558	860.504	.000
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	498.991	1	498.991	629.176	.000
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	487.628	1	487.628	920.898	.000
	What skills do you need (manage business)	435.566	1	435.566	1174.041	.000
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	426.426	1	426.426	1060.333	.000
q6	What skills do you need (accounting)	.001	1	.001	.002	.966
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	.740	1	.740	2.455	.119
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	.052	1	.052	.036	.849
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	.296	1	.296	.591	.443
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	4.545	1	4.545	5.731	.018
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	2.828	1	2.828	5.341	.022
	What skills do you need (manage business)	1.555	1	1.555	4.190	.042
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	.003	1	.003	.008	.931
Error	What skills do you need (accounting)	71.394	173	.413		
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	52.117	173	.301		
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	247.342	173	1.430		
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	86.562	173	.500		
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	137.204	173	.793		
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	91.606	173	.530		
	What skills do you need (manage business)	64.183	173	.371		
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	69.574	All 173	.402		

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Total	What skills do you need (accounting)	642.000	175			
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	382.000	175			
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	1121.000	175			
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	551.000	175			
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	698.000	175			
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	633.000	175			
	What skills do you need (manage business)	543.000	175			
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	524.000	175			
Corrected Total	What skills do you need (accounting)	71.394	174			
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	52.857	174			
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	247.394	174			
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	86.857	174			
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	141.749	174			
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	94.434	174			
	What skills do you need (manage business)	65.737	174			
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	69.577	174			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Corrected Model	What skills do you need (accounting)	.000	.002	.050
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	.014	2.455	.344
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	.000	.036	.054
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	.003	.591	.119
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	.032	5.731	.663
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	.030	5.341	.632
	What skills do you need (manage business)	.024	4.190	.530
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	.000	.008	.051
Intercept	What skills do you need (accounting)	.882	1298.443	1.000
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	.853	1002.076	1.000
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	.768	571.895	1.000
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	.833	860.504	1.000
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	.784	629.176	1.000
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	.842	920.898	1.000
	What skills do you need (manage business)	.872	1174.041	1.000
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	.860	1060.333	1.000
q6	What skills do you need (accounting)	.000	.002	.050
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	.014	2.455	.344
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	.000	.036	.054
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	.003	.591	.119
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	.032	5.731	.663
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	.030	5.341	.632
	What skills do you need (manage business)	.024	4.190	.530
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	.000	.008	.051
Error	What skills do you need (accounting)			
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)			
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)			
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)			
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)			
	What skills do you need (manage staff)			
	What skills do you need (manage business)			
	What skills do you need (make decisions)		A117	

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Total	What skills do you need (accounting) What skills do you need (bld cust rels) What skills do you need (rels with supls) What skills do you need (know cust needs) What skills do you need (recruit staff) What skills do you need (manage staff) What skills do you need (manage business) What skills do you need (make decisions)			
Corrected Total	What skills do you need (accounting) What skills do you need (bld cust rels) What skills do you need (rels with supls) What skills do you need (know cust needs) What skills do you need (recruit staff) What skills do you need (manage staff) What skills do you need (manage business) What skills do you need (make decisions)			

- a. Computed using alpha = .05
- b. R Squared = .000 (Adjusted R Squared = -.006)
- c. R Squared = .014 (Adjusted R Squared = .008)
- d. R Squared = .003 (Adjusted R Squared = -.002)
- e. R Squared = .032 (Adjusted R Squared = .026)
- f. R Squared = .030 (Adjusted R Squared = .024)
- g. R Squared = .024 (Adjusted R Squared = .018)

General Linear Model

DataSet4] F:\Cosworth.sav

Between-Subjects Factors

	Value Label	N
duration 1.00	0-2 years	43
2.00	2 years or over	95

Descriptive Statistics

	duration	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	0-2 years	1.30	.465	43
	2 years or over	1.36	.544	95
	Total	1.34	.520	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	0-2 years	1.16	.374	43
	2 years or over	1.38	.587	95
	Total	1.31	.538	138
should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	0-2 years	2.23	.812	43
	2 years or over	2.11	.856	95
	Total	2.14	.842	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	0-2 years	1.81	.906	43
	2 years or over	1.80	.780	95
	Total	1.80	.818	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	0-2 years	2.70	1.206	43
	2 years or over	2.77	1.046	95
	Total	2.75	1.095	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	0-2 years	1.95	.844	43
	2 years or over	2.26	.878	95
	Total	2.17	.876	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	0-2 years	2.02	.988	43
	2 years or over	1.77	.805	95
	Total	1.85	.870	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	0-2 years	2.65	1.173	43
	2 years or over	2.65	1.183	95
	Total	2.65	1.175	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	0-2 years	2.40	1.050	43
	2 years or over	2.32	1.013	95
	Total	2.34	1.022	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	0-2 years	2.49	.985	43
	2 years or over	2.61	1.055	95
	Total	2.57	1.032	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	0-2 years	2.16	.843	43
	2 years or over	2.31	.968	95
	Total	2.26	.930	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	0-2 years	1.65	.842	43
	2 years or over	1.51	.836	95
	Total	1.55	.838	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	0-2 years	2.40	1.237	43
	2 years or over	2.46	1.090	95
	Total	2.44	1.134	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT)	0-2 years	2.35	.973	43
	2 years or over	2.75	1.021	95
	Total	2.62	1.020	138

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices^a

Box's M	166.191
F	1.369
df1	105
df2	22724.579
Sig.	.007

ests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+a2

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.970	285.998 ^b	14.000	123.000	.000	.970
	Wilks' Lambda	.030	285.998 ^b	14.000	123.000	.000	.970
	Hotelling's Trace	32.553	285.998 ^b	14.000	123.000	.000	.970
	Roy's Largest Root	32.553	285.998 ^b	14.000	123.000	.000	.970
a2	Pillai's Trace	.198	2.175 ^b	14.000	123.000	.012	.198
	Wilks' Lambda	.802	2.175 ^b	14.000	123.000	.012	.198
	Hotelling's Trace	.248	2.175 ^b	14.000	123.000	.012	.198
	Roy's Largest Root	.248	2.175 ^b	14.000	123.000	.012	.198

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	4003.973	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	4003.973	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	4003.973	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	4003.973	1.000
a2	Pillai's Trace	30.444	.954
	Wilks' Lambda	30.444	.954
	Hotelling's Trace	30.444	.954
	Roy's Largest Root	30.444	.954

a. Computed using alpha = .05

b. Exact statistic

c. Design: Intercept+a2

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	2.049	1	136	.155
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	22.231	1	136	.000
should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	.205	1	136	.652
Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	3.265	1	136	.073
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	3.665	1	136	.058
Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	.288	1	136	.593
Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	.056	1	136	.813
Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	.002	1	136	.968
Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	.010	1	136	.922
Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	.129	1	136	.720
Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	1.714	1	136	.193
Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	.297	1	136	.586
Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	.908	1	136	.342
Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	.025	1	136	.876

ests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+a2

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	.091 ^b	1	.091	.337	.563
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	1.383 ^c	1	1.383	4.922	.028
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	.480 ^d	1	.480	.675	.413
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	.006 ^e	1	.006	.009	.926
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	.148 ^f	1	.148	.123	.726
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	2.839 ^g	1	2.839	3.773	.054
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	1.922 ^h	1	1.922	2.566	.111
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	6.39E-005 ^e	1	6.39E-005	.000	.995
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	.187 ^f	1	.187	.178	.673
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	.442 ⁱ	1	.442	.413	.521
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	.601 ^d	1	.601	.692	.407
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	.630 ^j	1	.630	.897	.345
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	.136 ^k	1	.136	.105	.746
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	4.702 ^j	1	4.702	4.643	.033

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Intercept	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	209.483	1	209.483	772.049	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	191.238	1	191.238	680.521	.000
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	557.001	1	557.001	784.007	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	386.614	1	386.614	573.314	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	884.438	1	884.438	733.548	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	526.317	1	526.317	699.506	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	425.575	1	425.575	568.090	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	832.696	1	832.696	598.225	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	656.999	1	656.999	625.690	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	769.601	1	769.601	720.176	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	590.949	1	590.949	681.048	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	294.920	1	294.920	419.926	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	698.745	1	698.745	540.246	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	768.788	1	768.788	759.274	.000

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
a2	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	.091	1	.091	.337	.563
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	1.383	1	1.383	4.922	.028
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	.480	1	.480	.675	.413
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	.006	1	.006	.009	.926
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	.148	1	.148	.123	.726
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	2.839	1	2.839	3.773	.054
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	1.922	1	1.922	2.566	.111
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	6.39E-005	1	6.39E-005	.000	.995
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	.187	1	.187	.178	.673
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	.442	1	.442	.413	.521
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	.601	1	.601	.692	.407
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	.630	1	.630	.897	.345
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	.136	1	.136	.105	.746
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	4.702	1	4.702	4.643	.033

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Error	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	36.901	136	.271		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	38.218	136	.281		
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	96.622	136	.710		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	91.712	136	.674		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	163.975	136	1.206		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	102.328	136	.752		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	101.882	136	.749		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	189.304	136	1.392		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	142.805	136	1.050		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	145.334	136	1.069		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	118.008	136	.868		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	95.515	136	.702		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	175.900	136	1.293		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (using IT	137.704	136	1.013		

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Total	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	285.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	277.000	138			
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	732.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	541.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	1205.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	753.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	575.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	1160.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	899.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	1059.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	824.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	428.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	999.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	1092.000	138			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Total	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	36.993	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	39.601	137			
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	97.101	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	91.717	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	164.123	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	105.167	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	103.804	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	189.304	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	142.993	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	145.775	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	118.609	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	96.145	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	176.036	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	142.406	137			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Corrected Model	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	.002	.337	.089
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	.035	4.922	.596
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	.005	.675	.129
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	.000	.009	.051
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	.001	.123	.064
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	.027	3.773	.488
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	.019	2.566	.356
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	.000	.000	.050
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	.001	.178	.070
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	.003	.413	.098
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	.005	.692	.131
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	.007	.897	.156
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	.001	.105	.062
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	.033	4.643	.571

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Intercept	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	.850	772.049	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	.833	680.521	1.000
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	.852	784.007	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	.808	573.314	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	.844	733.548	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	.837	699.506	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	.807	568.090	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	.815	598.225	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	.821	625.690	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	.841	720.176	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	.834	681.048	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	.755	419.926	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	.799	540.246	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	.848	759.274	1.000

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
a2	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	.002	.337	.089
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	.035	4.922	.596
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	.005	.675	.129
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	.000	.009	.051
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	.001	.123	.064
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	.027	3.773	.488
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	.019	2.566	.356
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	.000	.000	.050
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	.001	.178	.070
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	.003	.413	.098
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	.005	.692	.131
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	.007	.897	.156
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	.001	.105	.062
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	.033	4.643	.571

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Error	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)			
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Total	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)			
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Corrected Total	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance) Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.) should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff) Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff) Should these skills be on OM training progs. (di Supplrs) Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing) Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap) Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues) Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff) Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family) Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt) Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels) Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling) Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT			

- a. Computed using alpha = .05
- b. R Squared = .002 (Adjusted R Squared = -.005)
- c. R Squared = .035 (Adjusted R Squared = .028)
- d. R Squared = .005 (Adjusted R Squared = -.002)
- e. R Squared = .000 (Adjusted R Squared = -.007)
- f. R Squared = .001 (Adjusted R Squared = -.006)
- g. R Squared = .027 (Adjusted R Squared = .020)
- h. R Squared = .019 (Adjusted R Squared = .011)
- i. R Squared = .003 (Adjusted R Squared = -.004)
- j. R Squared = .007 (Adjusted R Squared = -.001)
- k. R Squared = .001 (Adjusted R Squared = -.007)
- l. R Squared = .033 (Adjusted R Squared = .026)

Estimated Marginal Means

duration

Dependent Variable	duration	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	0-2 years	1.302	.079	1.145	1.459
	2 years or over	1.358	.053	1.252	1.464
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	0-2 years	1.163	.081	1.003	1.323
	2 years or over	1.379	.054	1.271	1.487
should these skills be on OM training progs	0-2 years	2.233	.129	1.978	2.487
	2 years or over	2.105	.086	1.934	2.276
Should these skills be on OM training progs	0-2 years	1.814	.125	1.566	2.062
	2 years or over	1.800	.084	1.633	1.967
Should these skills be on OM training progs.	0-2 years	2.698	.167	2.367	3.029
	2 years or over	2.768	.113	2.546	2.991
Should these skills be on OM training progs	0-2 years	1.953	.132	1.692	2.215
	2 years or over	2.263	.089	2.087	2.439
Should these skills be on OM training progs	0-2 years	2.023	.132	1.762	2.284
	2 years or over	1.768	.089	1.593	1.944
Should these skills be on OM training progs	0-2 years	2.651	.180	2.295	3.007
	2 years or over	2.653	.121	2.413	2.892
Should these skills be on OM training progs	0-2 years	2.395	.156	2.086	2.704
	2 years or over	2.316	.105	2.108	2.524
Should these skills be on OM training progs	0-2 years	2.488	.158	2.177	2.800
	2 years or over	2.611	.106	2.401	2.820
Should these skills be on OM training progs	0-2 years	2.163	.142	1.882	2.444
	2 years or over	2.305	.096	2.116	2.494
Should these skills be on OM training progs	0-2 years	1.651	.128	1.398	1.904
	2 years or over	1.505	.086	1.335	1.675
Should these skills be on OM training progs	0-2 years	2.395	.173	2.052	2.738
	2 years or over	2.463	.117	2.232	2.694
Should these skills be on OM training progs	0-2 years	2.349	.153	2.045	2.652
	2 years or over	2.747	.103	2.543	2.952

General Linear Model

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Between-Subjects Factors

	Value Label	N
Business type	1.00 retail services	64
	2.00 professional services	44
	3.00 tourism	67

Descriptive Statistics

	Business type	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
What skills do you need (accounting)	retail services	1.89	.620	64
	professional services	1.82	.657	44
	tourism	1.72	.647	67
	Total	1.81	.641	175
What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	retail services	1.42	.586	64
	professional services	1.41	.542	44
	tourism	1.30	.523	67
	Total	1.37	.551	175
What skills do you need (rels with supls)	retail services	2.25	1.141	64
	professional services	1.98	1.110	44
	tourism	2.39	1.279	67
	Total	2.23	1.192	175
What skills do you need (know cust needs)	retail services	1.45	.688	64
	professional services	1.70	.734	44
	tourism	1.75	.682	67
	Total	1.63	.707	175
What skills do you need (recruit staff)	retail services	1.73	.996	64
	professional services	1.82	.815	44
	tourism	1.81	.875	67
	Total	1.78	.903	175
What skills do you need (manage staff)	retail services	1.83	.747	64
	professional services	1.68	.601	44
	tourism	1.73	.809	67
	Total	1.75	.737	175
What skills do you need (manage business)	retail services	1.86	.587	64
	professional services	1.59	.583	44
	tourism	1.49	.612	67
	Total	1.65	.615	175
What skills do you need (make decisions)	retail services	1.81	.710	64
	professional services	1.50	.550	44
	tourism	1.49	.561	67
	Total	1.61	.632	175

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices^a

Box's M	111.391
F	1.440
df1	72
df2	62994.704
Sig.	.009

ests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+J1

Multivariate Tests^d

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.962	520.322 ^b	8.000	165.000	.000	.962
	Wilks' Lambda	.038	520.322 ^b	8.000	165.000	.000	.962
	Hotelling's Trace	25.228	520.322 ^b	8.000	165.000	.000	.962
	Roy's Largest Root	25.228	520.322 ^b	8.000	165.000	.000	.962
j1	Pillai's Trace	.178	2.027	16.000	332.000	.011	.089
	Wilks' Lambda	.827	2.061 ^b	16.000	330.000	.010	.091
	Hotelling's Trace	.204	2.095	16.000	328.000	.008	.093
	Roy's Largest Root	.173	3.583 ^c	8.000	166.000	.001	.147

Multivariate Tests^d

Effect		Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	4162.573	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	4162.573	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	4162.573	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	4162.573	1.000
j1	Pillai's Trace	32.432	.969
	Wilks' Lambda	32.979	.972
	Hotelling's Trace	33.520	.974
	Roy's Largest Root	28.665	.981

- a. Computed using alpha = .05
- b. Exact statistic
- c. The statistic is an upper bound on F that yields a lower bound on the significance level.
- d. Design: Intercept+j1

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
What skills do you need (accounting)	1.300	2	172	.275
What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	2.302	2	172	.103
What skills do you need (rels with supls)	1.039	2	172	.356
What skills do you need (know cust needs)	.431	2	172	.651
What skills do you need (recruit staff)	1.242	2	172	.291
What skills do you need (manage staff)	1.250	2	172	.289
What skills do you need (manage business)	2.599	2	172	.077
What skills do you need (make decisions)	.015	2	172	.985

- ests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.
- a. Design: Intercept+j1

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	What skills do you need (accounting)	1.003 ^b	2	.501	1.225	.296
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	.582 ^c	2	.291	.957	.386
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	4.507 ^d	2	2.253	1.596	.206
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	3.152 ^e	2	1.576	3.239	.042
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	.241 ^f	2	.121	.147	.864
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	.615 ^g	2	.308	.564	.570
	What skills do you need (manage business)	4.620 ^h	2	2.310	6.501	.002
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	4.081 ⁱ	2	2.040	5.358	.006
Intercept	What skills do you need (accounting)	552.447	1	552.447	1349.886	.000
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	320.070	1	320.070	1053.110	.000
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	821.407	1	821.407	581.676	.000
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	451.383	1	451.383	927.517	.000
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	538.947	1	538.947	655.081	.000
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	515.621	1	515.621	945.297	.000
	What skills do you need (manage business)	458.569	1	458.569	1290.539	.000
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	433.360	1	433.360	1138.048	.000
j1	What skills do you need (accounting)	1.003	2	.501	1.225	.296
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	.582	2	.291	.957	.386
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	4.507	2	2.253	1.596	.206
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	3.152	2	1.576	3.239	.042
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	.241	2	.121	.147	.864
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	.615	2	.308	.564	.570
	What skills do you need (manage business)	4.620	2	2.310	6.501	.002
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	4.081	2	2.040	5.358	.006
Error	What skills do you need (accounting)	70.392	172	.409		
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	52.276	172	.304		
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	242.888	172	1.412		
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	83.705	172	.487		
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	141.507	172	.823		
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	93.819	172	.545		
	What skills do you need (manage business)	61.117	172	.355		
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	65.496	A13872	.381		

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Total	What skills do you need (accounting)	642.000	175			
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	382.000	175			
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	1121.000	175			
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	551.000	175			
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	698.000	175			
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	633.000	175			
	What skills do you need (manage business)	543.000	175			
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	524.000	175			
Corrected Total	What skills do you need (accounting)	71.394	174			
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	52.857	174			
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	247.394	174			
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	86.857	174			
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	141.749	174			
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	94.434	174			
	What skills do you need (manage business)	65.737	174			
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	69.577	174			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Corrected Model	What skills do you need (accounting)	.014	2.450	.265
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	.011	1.913	.214
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	.018	3.191	.335
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	.036	6.477	.611
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	.002	.293	.072
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	.007	1.128	.142
	What skills do you need (manage business)	.070	13.002	.903
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	.059	10.717	.836
Intercept	What skills do you need (accounting)	.887	1349.886	1.000
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	.860	1053.110	1.000
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	.772	581.676	1.000
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	.844	927.517	1.000
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	.792	655.081	1.000
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	.846	945.297	1.000
	What skills do you need (manage business)	.882	1290.539	1.000
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	.869	1138.048	1.000
j1	What skills do you need (accounting)	.014	2.450	.265
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)	.011	1.913	.214
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)	.018	3.191	.335
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)	.036	6.477	.611
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)	.002	.293	.072
	What skills do you need (manage staff)	.007	1.128	.142
	What skills do you need (manage business)	.070	13.002	.903
	What skills do you need (make decisions)	.059	10.717	.836
Error	What skills do you need (accounting)			
	What skills do you need (bld cust rels)			
	What skills do you need (rels with supls)			
	What skills do you need (know cust needs)			
	What skills do you need (recruit staff)			
	What skills do you need (manage staff)			
	What skills do you need (manage business)			
	What skills do you need (make decisions)		A140	

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Total	What skills do you need (accounting) What skills do you need (bld cust rels) What skills do you need (rels with supls) What skills do you need (know cust needs) What skills do you need (recruit staff) What skills do you need (manage staff) What skills do you need (manage business) What skills do you need (make decisions)			
Corrected Total	What skills do you need (accounting) What skills do you need (bld cust rels) What skills do you need (rels with supls) What skills do you need (know cust needs) What skills do you need (recruit staff) What skills do you need (manage staff) What skills do you need (manage business) What skills do you need (make decisions)			

- a. Computed using alpha = .05
- b. R Squared = .014 (Adjusted R Squared = .003)
- c. R Squared = .011 (Adjusted R Squared = .000)
- d. R Squared = .018 (Adjusted R Squared = .007)
- e. R Squared = .036 (Adjusted R Squared = .025)
- f. R Squared = .002 (Adjusted R Squared = -.010)
- g. R Squared = .007 (Adjusted R Squared = -.005)
- h. R Squared = .070 (Adjusted R Squared = .059)
- i. R Squared = .059 (Adjusted R Squared = .048)

General Linear Model

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Between-Subjects Factors

		Value Label	N
Is this the first business owned	1	yes	110
	2	no	28

Descriptive Statistics

	Is this the first	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	yes	1.35	.532	110
	no	1.32	.476	28
	Total	1.34	.520	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	yes	1.32	.541	110
	no	1.29	.535	28
	Total	1.31	.538	138
should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	yes	2.13	.858	110
	no	2.21	.787	28
	Total	2.14	.842	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	yes	1.75	.795	110
	no	2.04	.881	28
	Total	1.80	.818	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	yes	2.69	1.123	110
	no	2.96	.962	28
	Total	2.75	1.095	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	yes	2.19	.934	110
	no	2.07	.604	28
	Total	2.17	.876	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	yes	1.85	.890	110
	no	1.86	.803	28
	Total	1.85	.870	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	yes	2.62	1.173	110
	no	2.79	1.197	28
	Total	2.65	1.175	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	yes	2.34	1.016	110
	no	2.36	1.062	28
	Total	2.34	1.022	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	yes	2.55	1.081	110
	no	2.68	.819	28
	Total	2.57	1.032	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	yes	2.26	.945	110
	no	2.25	.887	28
	Total	2.26	.930	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	yes	1.61	.879	110
	no	1.32	.612	28
	Total	1.55	.838	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	yes	2.47	1.179	110
	no	2.32	.945	28
	Total	2.44	1.134	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	yes	2.59	1.025	110
	no	2.75	1.005	28
	Total	2.62	1.020	138

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices^a

Box's M	171.825
F	1.309
df1	105
df2	7841.024
Sig.	.019

ests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+q6

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.961	219.171 ^b	14.000	123.000	.000	.961
	Wilks' Lambda	.039	219.171 ^b	14.000	123.000	.000	.961
	Hotelling's Trace	24.946	219.171 ^b	14.000	123.000	.000	.961
	Roy's Largest Root	24.946	219.171 ^b	14.000	123.000	.000	.961
q6	Pillai's Trace	.076	.722 ^b	14.000	123.000	.749	.076
	Wilks' Lambda	.924	.722 ^b	14.000	123.000	.749	.076
	Hotelling's Trace	.082	.722 ^b	14.000	123.000	.749	.076
	Roy's Largest Root	.082	.722 ^b	14.000	123.000	.749	.076

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	3068.397	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	3068.397	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	3068.397	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	3068.397	1.000
q6	Pillai's Trace	10.110	.435
	Wilks' Lambda	10.110	.435
	Hotelling's Trace	10.110	.435
	Roy's Largest Root	10.110	.435

- a. Computed using alpha = .05
- b. Exact statistic
- c. Design: Intercept+q6

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	.509	1	136	.477
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	.214	1	136	.644
Should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	.002	1	136	.968
Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	.835	1	136	.362
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	3.616	1	136	.059
Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	7.138	1	136	.008
Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	.472	1	136	.493
Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	.027	1	136	.869
Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	.008	1	136	.930
Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	6.251	1	136	.014
Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	.084	1	136	.772
Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	7.526	1	136	.007
Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	1.968	1	136	.163
Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	.227	1	136	.635

ests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

- a. Design: Intercept+q6

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	.013 ^b	1	.013	.047	.828
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	.024 ^c	1	.024	.081	.777
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	.169 ^d	1	.169	.237	.627
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	1.880 ^e	1	1.880	2.847	.094
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	1.668 ^f	1	1.668	1.396	.239
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	.319 ^g	1	.319	.413	.521
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	.003 ^b	1	.003	.004	.950
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	.626 ^g	1	.626	.452	.503
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	.010 ^b	1	.010	.009	.924
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	.395 ^h	1	.395	.370	.544
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	.004 ^b	1	.004	.005	.945
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	1.847 ⁱ	1	1.847	2.664	.105
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	.511 ^g	1	.511	.396	.530
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	.565 ⁱ	1	.565	.542	.463

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Intercept	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	158.738	1	158.738	583.785	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	151.328	1	151.328	520.002	.000
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	420.691	1	420.691	590.245	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	319.098	1	319.098	483.067	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	713.784	1	713.784	597.547	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	405.478	1	405.478	525.952	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	305.974	1	305.974	400.886	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	651.757	1	651.757	469.790	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	491.662	1	491.662	467.650	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	609.091	1	609.091	569.793	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	454.700	1	454.700	521.390	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	191.673	1	191.673	276.438	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	512.975	1	512.975	397.461	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT)	636.652	1	636.652	610.435	.000

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
q6	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	.013	1	.013	.047	.828
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	.024	1	.024	.081	.777
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	.169	1	.169	.237	.627
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	1.880	1	1.880	2.847	.094
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	1.668	1	1.668	1.396	.239
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	.319	1	.319	.413	.521
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	.003	1	.003	.004	.950
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	.626	1	.626	.452	.503
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	.010	1	.010	.009	.924
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	.395	1	.395	.370	.544
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	.004	1	.004	.005	.945
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	1.847	1	1.847	2.664	.105
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	.511	1	.511	.396	.530
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	.565	1	.565	.542	.463

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Error	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	36.980	136	.272		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	39.578	136	.291		
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	96.932	136	.713		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	89.837	136	.661		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	162.455	136	1.195		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	104.848	136	.771		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	103.801	136	.763		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	188.678	136	1.387		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	142.983	136	1.051		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	145.380	136	1.069		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	118.605	136	.872		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	94.298	136	.693		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	175.525	136	1.291		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	141.841	136	1.043		

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Total	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	285.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	277.000	138			
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	732.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	541.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	1205.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	753.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	575.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	1160.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	899.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	1059.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	824.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	428.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	999.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	1092.000	138			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Total	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	36.993	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	39.601	137			
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	97.101	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	91.717	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	164.123	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	105.167	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	103.804	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	189.304	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	142.993	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	145.775	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	118.609	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	96.145	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	176.036	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	142.406	137			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Corrected Model	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	.000	.047	.055
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	.001	.081	.059
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	.002	.237	.077
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	.021	2.847	.388
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	.010	1.396	.217
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	.003	.413	.098
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	.000	.004	.050
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	.003	.452	.102
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	.000	.009	.051
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	.003	.370	.093
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	.000	.005	.051
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	.019	2.664	.367
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	.003	.396	.096
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	.004	.542	.113

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Intercept	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	.811	583.785	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	.793	520.002	1.000
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	.813	590.245	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	.780	483.067	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	.815	597.547	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	.795	525.952	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	.747	400.886	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	.775	469.790	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	.775	467.650	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	.807	569.793	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	.793	521.390	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	.670	276.438	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	.745	397.461	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	.818	610.435	1.000

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
q6	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	.000	.047	.055
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	.001	.081	.059
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	.002	.237	.077
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	.021	2.847	.388
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	.010	1.396	.217
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	.003	.413	.098
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	.000	.004	.050
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	.003	.452	.102
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	.000	.009	.051
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	.003	.370	.093
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	.000	.005	.051
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	.019	2.664	.367
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	.003	.396	.096
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	.004	.542	.113

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Error	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)			
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Total	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance) Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.) should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff) Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff) Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs) Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing) Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap) Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues) Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff) Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family) Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt) Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels) Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling) Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Corrected Total	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance) Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.) should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff) Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff) Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs) Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing) Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap) Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues) Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff) Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family) Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt) Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels) Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling) Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT			

- a. Computed using alpha = .05
- b. R Squared = .000 (Adjusted R Squared = -.007)
- c. R Squared = .001 (Adjusted R Squared = -.007)
- d. R Squared = .002 (Adjusted R Squared = -.006)
- e. R Squared = .021 (Adjusted R Squared = .013)
- f. R Squared = .010 (Adjusted R Squared = .003)
- g. R Squared = .003 (Adjusted R Squared = -.004)
- h. R Squared = .003 (Adjusted R Squared = -.005)
- i. R Squared = .019 (Adjusted R Squared = .012)
- j. R Squared = .004 (Adjusted R Squared = -.003)

General Linear Model

DataSet4] F:\Cosworth.sav

Between-Subjects Factors

		Value Label	N
Business type	1.00	retail services	44
	2.00	professional services	22
	3.00	tourism	72

Descriptive Statistics

	Business type	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	retail services	1.32	.518	44
	professional services	1.45	.510	22
	tourism	1.32	.526	72
	Total	1.34	.520	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	retail services	1.34	.645	44
	professional services	1.59	.590	22
	tourism	1.21	.409	72
	Total	1.31	.538	138
should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	retail services	2.14	.878	44
	professional services	2.23	.813	22
	tourism	2.13	.838	72
	Total	2.14	.842	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	retail services	1.73	.817	44
	professional services	1.68	.839	22
	tourism	1.89	.815	72
	Total	1.80	.818	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	retail services	2.70	1.231	44
	professional services	3.09	1.019	22
	tourism	2.67	1.021	72
	Total	2.75	1.095	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	retail services	2.05	.834	44
	professional services	2.32	.945	22
	tourism	2.19	.882	72
	Total	2.17	.876	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	retail services	1.95	.939	44
	professional services	1.77	.922	22
	tourism	1.81	.816	72
	Total	1.85	.870	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	retail services	2.80	1.212	44
	professional services	2.23	1.066	22
	tourism	2.69	1.171	72
	Total	2.65	1.175	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	retail services	2.23	1.236	44
	professional services	2.18	.853	22
	tourism	2.46	.918	72
	Total	2.34	1.022	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	retail services	2.41	1.064	44
	professional services	2.91	1.019	22
	tourism	2.57	1.005	72
	Total	2.57	1.032	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	retail services	2.39	1.017	44
	professional services	2.23	.922	22
	tourism	2.19	.882	72
	Total	2.26	.930	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	retail services	1.61	.895	44
	professional services	1.59	.908	22
	tourism	1.50	.787	72
	Total	1.55	.838	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	retail services	2.41	1.187	44
	professional services	2.14	1.037	22
	tourism	2.56	1.124	72
	Total	2.44	1.134	138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT)	retail services	2.61	.993	44
	professional services	2.27	.985	22
	tourism	2.74	1.035	72
	Total	2.62	1.020	138

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices^a

Box's M	315.543
F	1.198
df1	210
df2	12955.687
Sig.	.027

ests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+j1

Multivariate Tests^d

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.969	275.283 ^b	14.000	122.000	.000	.969
	Wilks' Lambda	.031	275.283 ^b	14.000	122.000	.000	.969
	Hotelling's Trace	31.590	275.283 ^b	14.000	122.000	.000	.969
	Roy's Largest Root	31.590	275.283 ^b	14.000	122.000	.000	.969
j1	Pillai's Trace	.284	1.451	28.000	246.000	.072	.142
	Wilks' Lambda	.732	1.468 ^b	28.000	244.000	.067	.144
	Hotelling's Trace	.343	1.484	28.000	242.000	.061	.147
	Roy's Largest Root	.259	2.275 ^c	14.000	123.000	.008	.206

Multivariate Tests^d

Effect		Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	3853.958	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	3853.958	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	3853.958	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	3853.958	1.000
j1	Pillai's Trace	40.636	.967
	Wilks' Lambda	41.097	.969
	Hotelling's Trace	41.547	.971
	Roy's Largest Root	31.848	.964

- a. Computed using alpha = .05
- b. Exact statistic
- c. The statistic is an upper bound on F that yields a lower bound on the significance level.
- d. Design: Intercept+j1

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	.333	2	135	.717
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	7.433	2	135	.001
should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	.062	2	135	.940
Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	.275	2	135	.760
Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	2.010	2	135	.138
Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	.884	2	135	.415
Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	1.212	2	135	.301
Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	.470	2	135	.626
Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	3.155	2	135	.046
Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	.345	2	135	.709
Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	.842	2	135	.433
Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	1.589	2	135	.208
Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	.113	2	135	.893
Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT)	.083	2	135	.920

- ests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.
- a. Design: Intercept+j1

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	.340 ^b	2	.170	.626	.536
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	2.522 ^c	2	1.261	4.591	.012
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	.181 ^d	2	.090	.126	.882
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	1.106 ^e	2	.553	.824	.441
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	3.146 ^f	2	1.573	1.319	.271
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	1.207 ^g	2	.604	.784	.459
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	.754 ^h	2	.377	.494	.611
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	5.004 ⁱ	2	2.502	1.833	.164
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	2.118 ^j	2	1.059	1.015	.365
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	3.668 ^k	2	1.834	1.742	.179
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	1.035 ^l	2	.518	.594	.553
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	.395 ^m	2	.197	.278	.757
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	3.031 ⁿ	2	1.516	1.183	.310
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	3.624 ^k	2	1.812	1.763	.176

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Intercept	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	204.042	1	204.042	751.530	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	208.855	1	208.855	760.403	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	513.002	1	513.002	714.557	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	342.005	1	342.005	509.548	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	872.510	1	872.510	731.711	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	524.041	1	524.041	680.510	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	372.998	1	372.998	488.641	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	725.652	1	725.652	531.539	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	574.645	1	574.645	550.680	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	758.062	1	758.062	720.148	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	564.756	1	564.756	648.465	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	269.679	1	269.679	380.226	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	614.401	1	614.401	479.432	.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	707.952	1	707.952	688.661	.000

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
j1	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	.340	2	.170	.626	.536
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	2.522	2	1.261	4.591	.012
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	.181	2	.090	.126	.882
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	1.106	2	.553	.824	.441
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	3.146	2	1.573	1.319	.271
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	1.207	2	.604	.784	.459
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	.754	2	.377	.494	.611
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	5.004	2	2.502	1.833	.164
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	2.118	2	1.059	1.015	.365
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	3.668	2	1.834	1.742	.179
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	1.035	2	.518	.594	.553
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	.395	2	.197	.278	.757
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	3.031	2	1.516	1.183	.310
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	3.624	2	1.812	1.763	.176

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Error	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	36.653	135	.272		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	37.080	135	.275		
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	96.920	135	.718		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	90.611	135	.671		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Suppls)	160.977	135	1.192		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	103.960	135	.770		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	103.051	135	.763		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	184.301	135	1.365		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	140.875	135	1.044		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	142.107	135	1.053		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	117.573	135	.871		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	95.750	135	.709		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	173.005	135	1.282		
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	138.782	135	1.028		

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Total	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	285.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	277.000	138			
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	732.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	541.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	1205.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	753.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	575.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	1160.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	899.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	1059.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	824.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	428.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	999.000	138			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	1092.000	138			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Total	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	36.993	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	39.601	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	97.101	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	91.717	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	164.123	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	105.167	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	103.804	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	189.304	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	142.993	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	145.775	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	118.609	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	96.145	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	176.036	137			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT)	142.406	137			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Corrected Model	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	.009	1.252	.153
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	.064	9.182	.770
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	.002	.252	.069
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	.012	1.648	.189
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	.019	2.638	.281
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	.011	1.567	.181
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	.007	.988	.130
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	.026	3.665	.377
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	.015	2.029	.224
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	.025	3.485	.360
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	.009	1.189	.147
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	.004	.557	.093
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	.017	2.365	.256
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	.025	3.525	.364

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Intercept	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	.848	751.530	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	.849	760.403	1.000
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	.841	714.557	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	.791	509.548	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	.844	731.711	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	.834	680.510	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	.784	488.641	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	.797	531.539	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	.803	550.680	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	.842	720.148	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	.828	648.465	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	.738	380.226	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	.780	479.432	1.000
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	.836	688.661	1.000

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
1	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)	.009	1.252	.153
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)	.064	9.182	.770
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)	.002	.252	.069
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)	.012	1.648	.189
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)	.019	2.638	.281
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)	.011	1.567	.181
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)	.007	.988	.130
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)	.026	3.665	.377
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)	.015	2.029	.224
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)	.025	3.485	.360
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)	.009	1.189	.147
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)	.004	.557	.093
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)	.017	2.365	.256
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT	.025	3.525	.364

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Error	<p>Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)</p> <p>Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)</p> <p>should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)</p> <p>Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)</p> <p>Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)</p> <p>Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)</p> <p>Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)</p> <p>Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)</p> <p>Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)</p> <p>Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)</p> <p>Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)</p> <p>Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)</p> <p>Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)</p> <p>Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT</p>			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Total	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)			
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Corrected Total	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (finance)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (gen man.)			
	should these skills be on OM training progs (rec staff)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man staff)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs. (dl Supplrs)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (marketing)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (raising cap)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (H&S issues)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Legal stuff)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (man family)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (Time mangmt)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (cust rels)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (selling)			
	Should these skills be on OM training progs (using IT			

- a. Computed using alpha = .05
- b. R Squared = .009 (Adjusted R Squared = -.005)
- c. R Squared = .064 (Adjusted R Squared = .050)
- d. R Squared = .002 (Adjusted R Squared = -.013)
- e. R Squared = .012 (Adjusted R Squared = -.003)
- f. R Squared = .019 (Adjusted R Squared = .005)
- g. R Squared = .011 (Adjusted R Squared = -.003)
- h. R Squared = .007 (Adjusted R Squared = -.007)
- i. R Squared = .026 (Adjusted R Squared = .012)
- j. R Squared = .015 (Adjusted R Squared = .000)
- k. R Squared = .025 (Adjusted R Squared = .011)
- l. R Squared = .009 (Adjusted R Squared = -.006)
- m. R Squared = .004 (Adjusted R Squared = -.011)
- n. R Squared = .017 (Adjusted R Squared = .003)

General Linear Model

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Between-Subjects Factors

		Value Label	N
Is this the first business owned	1	yes	109
	2	no	66

Descriptive Statistics

Is this the first		Mean	Std. Deviation	N
How good are your skills (figure work)	yes	2.17	.687	109
	no	2.15	.769	66
	Total	2.16	.717	175
How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	yes	1.83	.678	109
	no	1.89	.530	66
	Total	1.85	.626	175
How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	yes	2.07	.742	109
	no	2.15	.707	66
	Total	2.10	.728	175
How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	yes	1.90	.745	109
	no	1.83	.622	66
	Total	1.87	.700	175
How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	yes	1.97	.775	109
	no	2.14	.762	66
	Total	2.03	.772	175
How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	yes	1.86	.739	109
	no	2.14	.875	66
	Total	1.97	.802	175
How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	yes	1.77	.633	109
	no	1.86	.699	66
	Total	1.81	.658	175
How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	yes	1.71	.657	109
	no	1.77	.602	66
	Total	1.73	.636	175

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices^a

Box's M	79.259
F	2.084
df1	36
df2	64471.740
Sig.	.000

ests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+q6

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.962	526.038 ^b	8.000	166.000	.000	.962
	Wilks' Lambda	.038	526.038 ^b	8.000	166.000	.000	.962
	Hotelling's Trace	25.351	526.038 ^b	8.000	166.000	.000	.962
	Roy's Largest Root	25.351	526.038 ^b	8.000	166.000	.000	.962
q6	Pillai's Trace	.048	1.057 ^b	8.000	166.000	.396	.048
	Wilks' Lambda	.952	1.057 ^b	178.000	166.000	.396	.048
	Hotelling's Trace	.051	1.057 ^b	8.000	166.000	.396	.048
	Roy's Largest Root	.051	1.057 ^b	8.000	166.000	.396	.048

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	4208.301	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	4208.301	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	4208.301	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	4208.301	1.000
q6	Pillai's Trace	8.455	.481
	Wilks' Lambda	8.455	.481
	Hotelling's Trace	8.455	.481
	Roy's Largest Root	8.455	.481

a. Computed using alpha = .05

b. Exact statistic

c. Design: Intercept+q6

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
How good are your skills (figure work)	1.796	1	173	.182
How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	6.123	1	173	.014
How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	.094	1	173	.760
How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	2.166	1	173	.143
How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	.441	1	173	.507
How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	.266	1	173	.606
How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	.196	1	173	.658
How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	2.338	1	173	.128

ests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+q6

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	How good are your skills (figure work)	.008 ^b	1	.008	.015	.903
	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	.191 ^c	1	.191	.488	.486
	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	.251 ^c	1	.251	.472	.493
	How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	.178 ^d	1	.178	.361	.548
	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	1.104 ^e	1	1.104	1.860	.174
	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	3.086 ^f	1	3.086	4.911	.028
	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	.356 ^g	1	.356	.820	.367
	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	.181 ^c	1	.181	.445	.505
Intercept	How good are your skills (figure work)	765.996	1	765.996	1480.436	.000
	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	568.763	1	568.763	1448.157	.000
	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	733.782	1	733.782	1381.366	.000
	How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	572.681	1	572.681	1164.798	.000
	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	694.018	1	694.018	1169.199	.000
	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	657.326	1	657.326	1046.076	.000
	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	542.961	1	542.961	1251.783	.000
	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	497.598	1	497.598	1226.337	.000
q6	How good are your skills (figure work)	.008	1	.008	.015	.903
	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	.191	1	.191	.488	.486
	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	.251	1	.251	.472	.493
	How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	.178	1	.178	.361	.548
	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	1.104	1	1.104	1.860	.174
	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	3.086	1	3.086	4.911	.028
	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	.356	1	.356	.820	.367
	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	.181	1	.181	.445	.505

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Error	How good are your skills (figure work)	89.512	173	.517		
	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	67.946	173	.393		
	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	91.898	173	.531		
	How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	85.057	173	.492		
	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	102.690	173	.594		
	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	108.709	173	.628		
	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	75.039	173	.434		
	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	70.196	173	.406		
Total	How good are your skills (figure work)	906.000	175			
	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	668.000	175			
	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	866.000	175			
	How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	700.000	175			
	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	828.000	175			
	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	788.000	175			
	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	646.000	175			
	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	595.000	175			
Corrected Total	How good are your skills (figure work)	89.520	174			
	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	68.137	174			
	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	92.149	174			
	How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	85.234	174			
	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	103.794	174			
	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	111.794	174			
	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	75.394	174			
	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	70.377	174			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Corrected Model	How good are your skills (figure work)	.000	.015	.052
	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	.003	.488	.107
	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	.003	.472	.105
	How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	.002	.361	.092
	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	.011	1.860	.273
	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	.028	4.911	.596
	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	.005	.820	.147
	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	.003	.445	.102
Intercept	How good are your skills (figure work)	.895	1480.436	1.000
	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	.893	1448.157	1.000
	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	.889	1381.366	1.000
	How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	.871	1164.798	1.000
	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	.871	1169.199	1.000
	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	.858	1046.076	1.000
	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	.879	1251.783	1.000
	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	.876	1226.337	1.000
q6	How good are your skills (figure work)	.000	.015	.052
	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	.003	.488	.107
	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	.003	.472	.105
	How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	.002	.361	.092
	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	.011	1.860	.273
	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	.028	4.911	.596
	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	.005	.820	.147
	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	.003	.445	.102

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Error	How good are your skills (figure work) How good are your skills (Build cust rels) How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.) How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs) How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff) How good are your skills (ability to manage staff) How good are your skills (ability to manage business) How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)			
Total	How good are your skills (figure work) How good are your skills (Build cust rels) How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.) How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs) How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff) How good are your skills (ability to manage staff) How good are your skills (ability to manage business) How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)			
Corrected Total	How good are your skills (figure work) How good are your skills (Build cust rels) How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.) How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs) How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff) How good are your skills (ability to manage staff) How good are your skills (ability to manage business) How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)			

- a. Computed using alpha = .05
- b. R Squared = .000 (Adjusted R Squared = -.006)
- c. R Squared = .003 (Adjusted R Squared = -.003)
- d. R Squared = .002 (Adjusted R Squared = -.004)
- e. R Squared = .011 (Adjusted R Squared = .005)
- f. R Squared = .028 (Adjusted R Squared = .022)
- g. R Squared = .005 (Adjusted R Squared = -.001)

General Linear Model

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Between-Subjects Factors

	Value Label	N
length of time owned	1.00	46
	2.00	129
	0 - 2 years	
	2 years or over	

Descriptive Statistics

	length of time owned	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
How good are your skills (figure work)	0 - 2 years	2.30	.813	46
	2 years or over	2.11	.676	129
	Total	2.16	.717	175
How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	0 - 2 years	1.76	.736	46
	2 years or over	1.88	.581	129
	Total	1.85	.626	175
How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	0 - 2 years	2.11	.795	46
	2 years or over	2.10	.705	129
	Total	2.10	.728	175
How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	0 - 2 years	1.83	.709	46
	2 years or over	1.89	.699	129
	Total	1.87	.700	175
How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	0 - 2 years	2.13	.749	46
	2 years or over	2.00	.781	129
	Total	2.03	.772	175
How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	0 - 2 years	1.96	.815	46
	2 years or over	1.97	.800	129
	Total	1.97	.802	175
How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	0 - 2 years	1.76	.639	46
	2 years or over	1.82	.667	129
	Total	1.81	.658	175
How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	0 - 2 years	1.61	.614	46
	2 years or over	1.78	.640	129
	Total	1.73	.636	175

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices^a

Box's M	37.530
F	.970
df1	36
df2	25611.619
Sig.	.519

tests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+duration

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.954	428.598 ^b	8.000	166.000	.000	.954
	Wilks' Lambda	.046	428.598 ^b	8.000	166.000	.000	.954
	Hotelling's Trace	20.655	428.598 ^b	8.000	166.000	.000	.954
	Roy's Largest Root	20.655	428.598 ^b	8.000	166.000	.000	.954
duration	Pillai's Trace	.054	1.196 ^b	8.000	166.000	.304	.054
	Wilks' Lambda	.946	1.196 ^b	8.000	166.000	.304	.054
	Hotelling's Trace	.058	1.196 ^b	8.000	166.000	.304	.054
	Roy's Largest Root	.058	1.196 ^b	8.000	166.000	.304	.054

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	3428.781	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	3428.781	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	3428.781	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	3428.781	1.000
duration	Pillai's Trace	9.567	.541
	Wilks' Lambda	9.567	.541
	Hotelling's Trace	9.567	.541
	Roy's Largest Root	9.567	.541

a. Computed using alpha = .05

b. Exact statistic

c. Design: Intercept+duration

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
How good are your skills (figure work)	4.535	1	173	.035
How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	4.295	1	173	.040
How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	1.994	1	173	.160
How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	.919	1	173	.339
How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	.026	1	173	.872
How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	.719	1	173	.398
How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	.008	1	173	.930
How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	.222	1	173	.638

ests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+duration

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	How good are your skills (figure work)	1.300 ^b	1	1.300	2.550	.112
	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	.512 ^c	1	.512	1.309	.254
	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	.002 ^d	1	.002	.004	.950
	How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	.145 ^e	1	.145	.295	.588
	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	.577 ^f	1	.577	.967	.327
	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	.005 ^d	1	.005	.008	.928
	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	.125 ^e	1	.125	.288	.592
	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	.940 ^g	1	.940	2.342	.128
Intercept	How good are your skills (figure work)	660.317	1	660.317	1294.890	.000
	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	450.409	1	450.409	1152.241	.000
	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	600.848	1	600.848	1128.060	.000
	How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	468.625	1	468.625	952.788	.000
	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	578.497	1	578.497	969.604	.000
	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	522.520	1	522.520	808.629	.000
	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	435.211	1	435.211	1000.302	.000
	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	388.277	1	388.277	967.378	.000
duration	How good are your skills (figure work)	1.300	1	1.300	2.550	.112
	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	.512	1	.512	1.309	.254
	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	.002	1	.002	.004	.950
	How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	.145	1	.145	.295	.588
	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	.577	1	.577	.967	.327
	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	.005	1	.005	.008	.928
	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	.125	1	.125	.288	.592
	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	.940	1	.940	2.342	.128

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Error	How good are your skills (figure work)	88.220	173	.510		
	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	67.625	173	.391		
	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	92.146	173	.533		
	How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	85.089	173	.492		
	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	103.217	173	.597		
	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	111.789	173	.646		
	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	75.269	173	.435		
	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	69.437	173	.401		
Total	How good are your skills (figure work)	906.000	175			
	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	668.000	175			
	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	866.000	175			
	How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	700.000	175			
	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	828.000	175			
	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	788.000	175			
	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	646.000	175			
	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	595.000	175			
Corrected Total	How good are your skills (figure work)	89.520	174			
	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	68.137	174			
	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	92.149	174			
	How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	85.234	174			
	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	103.794	174			
	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	111.794	174			
	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	75.394	174			
	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	70.377	174			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Corrected Model	How good are your skills (figure work)	.015	2.550	.355
	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	.008	1.309	.206
	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	.000	.004	.050
	How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	.002	.295	.084
	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	.006	.967	.165
	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	.000	.008	.051
	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	.002	.288	.083
	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	.013	2.342	.331
Intercept	How good are your skills (figure work)	.882	1294.890	1.000
	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	.869	1152.241	1.000
	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	.867	1128.060	1.000
	How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	.846	952.788	1.000
	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	.849	969.604	1.000
	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	.824	808.629	1.000
	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	.853	1000.302	1.000
	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	.848	967.378	1.000
duration	How good are your skills (figure work)	.015	2.550	.355
	How good are your skills (Build cust rels)	.008	1.309	.206
	How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.)	.000	.004	.050
	How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs)	.002	.295	.084
	How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff)	.006	.967	.165
	How good are your skills (ability to manage staff)	.000	.008	.051
	How good are your skills (ability to manage business)	.002	.288	.083
	How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)	.013	2.342	.331

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Error	How good are your skills (figure work) How good are your skills (Build cust rels) How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.) How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs) How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff) How good are your skills (ability to manage staff) How good are your skills (ability to manage business) How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)			
Total	How good are your skills (figure work) How good are your skills (Build cust rels) How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.) How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs) How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff) How good are your skills (ability to manage staff) How good are your skills (ability to manage business) How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)			
Corrected Total	How good are your skills (figure work) How good are your skills (Build cust rels) How good are your skills (bldg rels with suppliers etc.) How good are your skills (perceiving customer needs) How good are your skills (ability to recruit staff) How good are your skills (ability to manage staff) How good are your skills (ability to manage business) How good are your skills (ability to make decisions)			

a. Computed using alpha = .05

b. R Squared = .015 (Adjusted R Squared = .009)

c. R Squared = .008 (Adjusted R Squared = .002)

d. R Squared = .000 (Adjusted R Squared = -.006)

e. R Squared = .002 (Adjusted R Squared = -.004)

f. R Squared = .006 (Adjusted R Squared = .000)

g. R Squared = .013 (Adjusted R Squared = .008)

Par Tests

DataSet1] F:\merged data.sav

Kruskal-Wallis Test

Ranks

	Business type	N	Mean Rank
What form should the training for OMs of PBs take	retail services	89	135.96
	professional services	61	137.78
	tourism	119	132.86
	Total	269	

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	What form should the training for OMs of PBs take
Chi-Square	.203
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.904

- a. Kruskal Wallis Test
- b. Grouping Variable: Business type

General Linear Model

DataSet1] F:\merged data.sav

Between-Subjects Factors

		Value Label	N
Training taken	1.00	Yes	54
	2.00	No	296

Descriptive Statistics

	Training taken	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
How successful is your business	Yes	1.83	.541	54
	No	1.97	.607	296
	Total	1.95	.599	350
Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	Yes	3.37	.760	54
	No	3.54	.916	296
	Total	3.52	.895	350

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices^a

Box's M	7.109
F	2.336
df1	3
df2	114951.3
Sig.	.072

ests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+q13

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.962	4393.074 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.962
	Wilks' Lambda	.038	4393.074 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.962
	Hotelling's Trace	25.320	4393.074 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.962
	Roy's Largest Root	25.320	4393.074 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.962
q13	Pillai's Trace	.022	3.935 ^b	2.000	347.000	.020	.022
	Wilks' Lambda	.978	3.935 ^b	2.000	347.000	.020	.022
	Hotelling's Trace	.023	3.935 ^b	2.000	347.000	.020	.022
	Roy's Largest Root	.023	3.935 ^b	2.000	347.000	.020	.022

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	8786.147	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	8786.147	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	8786.147	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	8786.147	1.000
q13	Pillai's Trace	7.870	.706
	Wilks' Lambda	7.870	.706
	Hotelling's Trace	7.870	.706
	Roy's Largest Root	7.870	.706

a. Computed using alpha = .05

b. Exact statistic

c. Design: Intercept+q13

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
How successful is your business	.048	1	348	.826
Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	2.679	1	348	.103

ests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+q13

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	How successful is your business	.848 ^b	1	.848	2.375	.124
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	1.375 ^c	1	1.375	1.722	.190
Intercept	How successful is your business	660.471	1	660.471	1850.202	.000
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	2183.295	1	2183.295	2732.833	.000
q13	How successful is your business	.848	1	.848	2.375	.124
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	1.375	1	1.375	1.722	.190
Error	How successful is your business	124.226	348	.357		
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	278.022	348	.799		
Total	How successful is your business	1454.000	350			
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	4609.000	350			
Corrected Total	How successful is your business	125.074	349			
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	279.397	349			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Corrected Model	How successful is your business	.007	2.375	.336
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	.005	1.722	.258
Intercept	How successful is your business	.842	1850.202	1.000
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	.887	2732.833	1.000
q13	How successful is your business	.007	2.375	.336
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	.005	1.722	.258
Error	How successful is your business			
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales			
Total	How successful is your business			
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales			
Corrected Total	How successful is your business			
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales			

- a. Computed using alpha = .05
- b. R Squared = .007 (Adjusted R Squared = .004)
- c. R Squared = .005 (Adjusted R Squared = .002)

General Linear Model

DataSet1] F:\merged data.sav

Between-Subjects Factors

		Value Label	N
Training taken	1.00	Yes	54
	2.00	No	296

Descriptive Statistics

	Training taken	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
How successful is your business	Yes	1.83	.541	54
	No	1.97	.607	296
	Total	1.95	.599	350
Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	Yes	3.37	.760	54
	No	3.54	.916	296
	Total	3.52	.895	350

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices^a

Box's M	7.109
F	2.336
df1	3
df2	114951.3
Sig.	.072

tests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept+q13

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.962	4393.074 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.962
	Wilks' Lambda	.038	4393.074 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.962
	Hotelling's Trace	25.320	4393.074 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.962
	Roy's Largest Root	25.320	4393.074 ^b	2.000	347.000	.000	.962
q13	Pillai's Trace	.022	3.935 ^b	2.000	347.000	.020	.022
	Wilks' Lambda	.978	3.935 ^b	2.000	347.000	.020	.022
	Hotelling's Trace	.023	3.935 ^b	2.000	347.000	.020	.022
	Roy's Largest Root	.023	3.935 ^b	2.000	347.000	.020	.022

Multivariate Tests^c

Effect		Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	8786.147	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	8786.147	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	8786.147	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	8786.147	1.000
q13	Pillai's Trace	7.870	.706
	Wilks' Lambda	7.870	.706
	Hotelling's Trace	7.870	.706
	Roy's Largest Root	7.870	.706

- a. Computed using alpha = .05
- b. Exact statistic
- c. Design: Intercept+q13

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
How successful is your business	.048	1	348	.826
Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	2.679	1	348	.103

ests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

- a. Design: Intercept+q13

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	How successful is your business	.848 ^b	1	.848	2.375	.124
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	1.375 ^c	1	1.375	1.722	.190
Intercept	How successful is your business	660.471	1	660.471	1850.202	.000
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	2183.295	1	2183.295	2732.833	.000
q13	How successful is your business	.848	1	.848	2.375	.124
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	1.375	1	1.375	1.722	.190
Error	How successful is your business	124.226	348	.357		
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	278.022	348	.799		
Total	How successful is your business	1454.000	350			
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	4609.000	350			
Corrected Total	How successful is your business	125.074	349			
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	279.397	349			

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^a
Corrected Model	How successful is your business	.007	2.375	.336
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	.005	1.722	.258
Intercept	How successful is your business	.842	1850.202	1.000
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	.887	2732.833	1.000
q13	How successful is your business	.007	2.375	.336
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales	.005	1.722	.258
Error	How successful is your business			
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales			
Total	How successful is your business			
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales			
Corrected Total	How successful is your business			
	Current rate of sales growth v last years sales			

- a. Computed using alpha = .05
- b. R Squared = .007 (Adjusted R Squared = .004)
- c. R Squared = .005 (Adjusted R Squared = .002)

Descriptives

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Training taken	FT employment same industry as business	61	1.8361	.37329
	FT employment different industry as business	115	1.8261	.38069
	FT or PT education	66	1.8485	.36130
	unemployed	24	1.9167	.28233
	self employed	25	1.8000	.40825
	other	59	1.8814	.32614
	Total	350	1.8457	.36174
	Model			.36317
			Fixed Effects	
			Random Effects	
future training	FT employment same industry as business	61	2.3934	.58534
	FT employment different industry as business	115	2.4696	.55126
	FT or PT education	66	2.5758	.49801
	unemployed	24	2.5833	.50361
	self employed	25	2.5600	.50662
	other	59	2.4576	.56697
	Total	350	2.4886	.54445
	Model			.54442
			Fixed Effects	
			Random Effects	

Descriptives

		Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Training taken	FT employment same industry as business	.04779	1.7405	1.9317
	FT employment different industry as business	.03550	1.7558	1.8964
	FT or PT education	.04447	1.7597	1.9373
	unemployed	.05763	1.7974	2.0359
	self employed	.08165	1.6315	1.9685
	other	.04246	1.7964	1.9663
	Total	.01934	1.8077	1.8837
	Model	.01941	1.8075	1.8839
	Fixed Effects			
	Random Effects	.01941 ^a	1.7958 ^a	1.8956 ^a
future training	FT employment same industry as business	.07495	2.2435	2.5434
	FT employment different industry as business	.05141	2.3677	2.5714
	FT or PT education	.06130	2.4533	2.6982
	unemployed	.10280	2.3707	2.7960
	self employed	.10132	2.3509	2.7691
	other	.07381	2.3099	2.6054
	Total	.02910	2.4313	2.5458
	Model	.02910	2.4313	2.5458
		Fixed Effects		
	Random Effects	.02927	2.4133	2.5638

Descriptives

		Minimum	Maximum	Between-Component Variance
Training taken	FT employment same industry as business	1.00	2.00	
	FT employment different industry as business	1.00	2.00	
	FT or PT education	1.00	2.00	
	unemployed	1.00	2.00	
	self employed	1.00	2.00	
	other	1.00	2.00	
	Total	1.00	2.00	
	Model			
Fixed Effects				
Random Effects			-.00131	
future training	FT employment same industry as business	1.00	3.00	
	FT employment different industry as business	1.00	3.00	
	FT or PT education	2.00	3.00	
	unemployed	2.00	3.00	
	self employed	2.00	3.00	
	other	1.00	3.00	
	Total	1.00	3.00	
	Model			
Fixed Effects				
Random Effects			.00005	

a. Warning: Between-component variance is negative. It was replaced by 0.0 in computing this random effects measure.

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Training taken	2.000	5	344	.078
future training	1.157	5	344	.330

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Training taken	Between Groups	.299	5	.060	.453	.811
	Within Groups	45.370	344	.132		
	Total	45.669	349			
future training	Between Groups	1.495	5	.299	1.009	.412
	Within Groups	101.959	344	.296		
	Total	103.454	349			

Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons

key HSD

Dependent Variable	(I) previous occupation	(J) previous occupation	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Training taken	FT employment same industry as business	FT employment different industry as business	.00998	.05752	1.000
		FT or PT education	-.01242	.06450	1.000
		unemployed	-.08060	.08751	.941
		self employed	.03607	.08624	.998
		other	-.04529	.06631	.984
	FT employment different industry as business	FT employment same industry as business	-.00998	.05752	1.000
		FT or PT education	-.02240	.05608	.999
		unemployed	-.09058	.08150	.877
		self employed	.02609	.08014	1.000
		other	-.05527	.05816	.933
	FT or PT education	FT employment same industry as business	.01242	.06450	1.000
		FT employment different industry as business	.02240	.05608	.999
		unemployed	-.06818	.08657	.970
		self employed	.04848	.08529	.993
		other	-.03287	.06507	.996
	unemployed	FT employment same industry as business	.08060	.08751	.941
		FT employment different industry as business	.09058	.08150	.877
		FT or PT education	.06818	.08657	.970
		self employed	.11667	.10378	.871
		other	.03531	.08793	.999
	self employed	FT employment same industry as business	-.03607	.08624	.998
		FT employment different industry as business	-.02609	.08014	1.000
		FT or PT education	-.04848	.08529	.993
		unemployed	-.11667	.10378	.871
		other	-.08136	.08667	.936
	other	FT employment same industry as business	.04529	.06631	.984
		FT employment different industry as business	.05527	.05816	.933
		FT or PT education	.03287	.06507	.996
		unemployed	-.03531	.08793	.999
		self employed	.08136	.08667	.936
future training	FT employment same industry as business	FT employment different industry as business	-.07612	.08623	.950
		FT or PT education	-.18231	.09669	.413
		unemployed	-.18989	.13118	.698
		self employed	-.16656	.12929	.791
		other	-.06418	.09941	.987
	FT employment different industry as business	FT employment same industry as business	.07612	.08623	.950
		FT or PT education	-.10619	.08407	.805
		unemployed	-.11377	.12218	.938
		self employed	-.09043	.12014	.975
		other	.01194	.08718	1.000
	FT or PT education	FT employment same industry as business	.18231	.09669	.413
		FT employment different industry as business	.10619	.08407	.805
		unemployed	-.00758	.12977	1.000
		self employed	.01576	.12785	1.000
		other	.11813	.09754	.831

Multiple Comparisons

ukey HSD

Dependent Variable			Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
future training	unemployed	(J) previous occupation			
		FT employment same industry as business	.18989	.13118	.698
		FT employment different industry as business	.11377	.12218	.938
		FT or PT education	.00758	.12977	1.000
		self employed	.02333	.15558	1.000
		other	.12571	.13181	.932
	self employed	FT employment same industry as business	.16656	.12929	.791
		FT employment different industry as business	.09043	.12014	.975
		FT or PT education	-.01576	.12785	1.000
		unemployed	-.02333	.15558	1.000
		other	.10237	.12992	.969
	other	FT employment same industry as business	.06418	.09941	.987
		FT employment different industry as business	-.01194	.08718	1.000
		FT or PT education	-.11813	.09754	.831
		unemployed	-.12571	.13181	.932
		self employed	-.10237	.12992	.969

Multiple Comparisons

key HSD

Dependent Variable	(I) previous occupation	(J) previous occupation	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Training taken	FT employment same industry as business	FT employment different industry as business	-.1549	.1748
		FT or PT education	-.1973	.1724
		unemployed	-.3314	.1702
		self employed	-.2111	.2832
		other	-.2353	.1448
	FT employment different industry as business	FT employment same industry as business	-.1748	.1549
		FT or PT education	-.1831	.1383
		unemployed	-.3241	.1430
		self employed	-.2036	.2558
		other	-.2219	.1114
	FT or PT education	FT employment same industry as business	-.1724	.1973
		FT employment different industry as business	-.1383	.1831
		unemployed	-.3163	.1799
		self employed	-.1959	.2929
		other	-.2193	.1536
	unemployed	FT employment same industry as business	-.1702	.3314
		FT employment different industry as business	-.1430	.3241
		FT or PT education	-.1799	.3163
		self employed	-.1808	.4141
		other	-.2167	.2873
	self employed	FT employment same industry as business	-.2832	.2111
		FT employment different industry as business	-.2558	.2036
		FT or PT education	-.2929	.1959
		unemployed	-.4141	.1808
		other	-.3297	.1670
	other	FT employment same industry as business	-.1448	.2353
		FT employment different industry as business	-.1114	.2219
		FT or PT education	-.1536	.2193
		unemployed	-.2873	.2167
		self employed	-.1670	.3297
future training	FT employment same industry as business	FT employment different industry as business	-.3233	.1710
		FT or PT education	-.4594	.0948
		unemployed	-.5658	.1861
		self employed	-.5371	.2040
		other	-.3491	.2207
	FT employment different industry as business	FT employment same industry as business	-.1710	.3233
		FT or PT education	-.3471	.1347
		unemployed	-.4639	.2364
		self employed	-.4347	.2539
		other	-.2379	.2618
	FT or PT education	FT employment same industry as business	-.0948	.4594
		FT employment different industry as business	-.1347	.3471
		unemployed	-.3795	.3643
		self employed	-.3507	.3822
		other	-.1614	.3977

A197

Multiple Comparisons

ukey HSD

			95% Confidence Interval	
Dependent Variable	(I) previous occupation	(J) previous occupation	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
future training	unemployed	FT employment same industry as business	-.1861	.5658
		FT employment different industry as business	-.2364	.4639
		FT or PT education	-.3643	.3795
		self employed	-.4225	.4692
		other	-.2520	.5034
	self employed	FT employment same industry as business	-.2040	.5371
		FT employment different industry as business	-.2539	.4347
		FT or PT education	-.3822	.3507
		unemployed	-.4692	.4225
		other	-.2700	.4747
	other	FT employment same industry as business	-.2207	.3491
		FT employment different industry as business	-.2618	.2379
		FT or PT education	-.3977	.1614
		unemployed	-.5034	.2520
		self employed	-.4747	.2700

omogeneous Subsets

Training taken

ukey HSD^{a,b}

previous occupation	N	Subset for alpha = .05
		1
self employed	25	1.8000
FT employment different industry as business	115	1.8261
FT employment same industry as business	61	1.8361
FT or PT education	66	1.8485
other	59	1.8814
unemployed	24	1.9167
Sig.		.669

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

- a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 43.210.
- b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

future training

key HSD^{a,b}

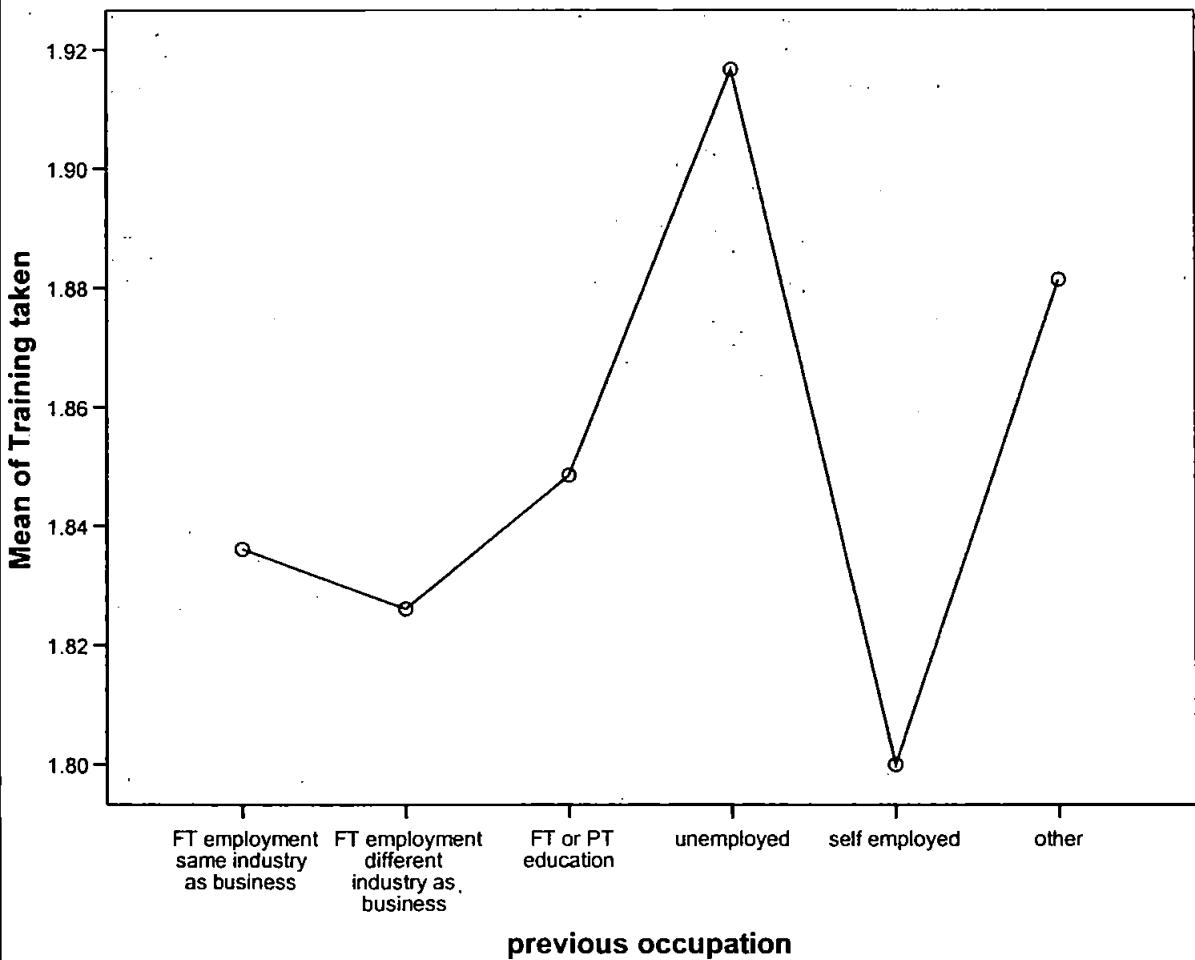
previous occupation	N	Subset for alpha = . 05
		1
FT employment same industry as business	61	2.3934
other	59	2.4576
FT employment different industry as business	115	2.4696
self employed	25	2.5600
FT or PT education	66	2.5758
unemployed	24	2.5833
Sig.		.585

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

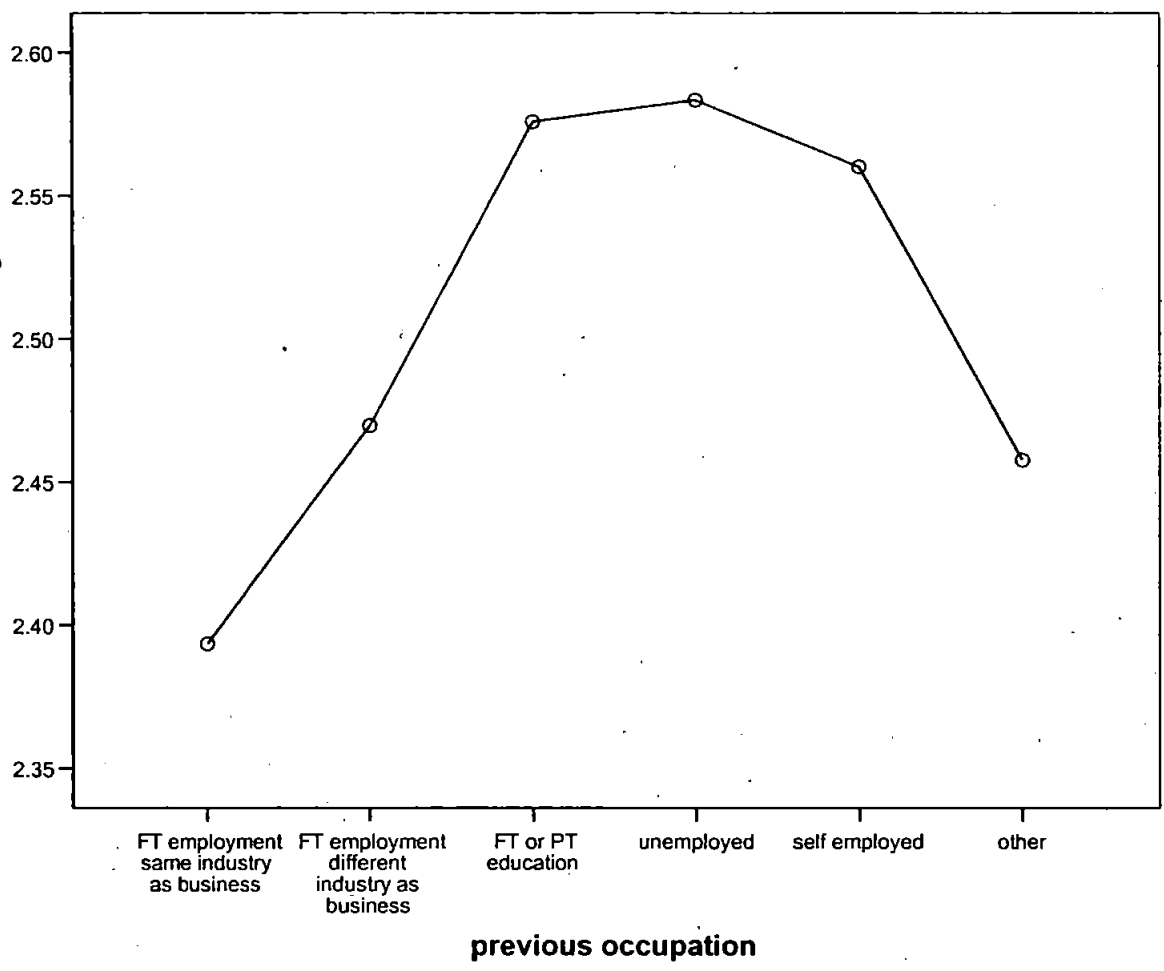
a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 43.210.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Means Plots



Mean of future training



PHASE 2: QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION
(Semi-Structured Interviews with Accountants)

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Descriptor	Definition
Principal Question	This refers to the key question that commences a line of enquiry.
Sub-Question	This is used to examine specific aspects of a subject and is directly related to the principal question. Some of the sub-questions may not apply to all the interviewees.
Justification	This shows the reasoning behind the posing of a principal question
Literature Based Precedents	This refers to an area of the literature that is directly linked to the principal question and the sub-questions that follow
Comments	This section provides any additional information that is considered relevant

Phase 2: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 1
Principal Question	What are the main problems experienced by small firms?	
Sub Question	N/A	
Rationale	This will pinpoint areas that are perceived as causing the most difficulties for small firm owners	
Literature Based Precedents	<p>An OM's perception of a problem can influence their behaviour, thus inducing them to seek information (Pineda et al., 1998).</p> <p>The areas in which small firms are most likely to experience problems are sales, marketing, human resource management and managing the business generally, although different problems occur in different industries (Huang & Brown 1999)</p>	
Comments		

Phase 2: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 2
Principal Question	In addition to the problems facing all small firms, are businesses that were taken over as going concerns likely to experience particular difficulties?	
Sub Question	<p>If 'yes': What specifically are these difficulties?</p> <p>If 'no': Why do you think they are likely to experience the same difficulties as other firms (start-ups for example)</p>	
Rationale	This will show whether there are any problems that may be accounted for by ownership context. It will therefore identify the problems that those taking over existing enterprises are likely to face thus making it possible to pinpoint areas that may require specialist advice and/or support.	
Literature Based Precedents	<p>As individual self-employment is totally different from self-employment with employees, each will experience different problems (Cowling et al. 2004)</p> <p>The problems facing small firms are likely to change as they enter different phases of growth (Terpstra & Olson, 1993)</p> <p>Martin & Staines, 1994; Huang & Brown, 1999).</p>	
Comments	This question looks specifically at the problems that are idiosyncratic to business type. It does not include difficulties that are generic in nature and therefore likely to affect all small firms (time shortage, raising capital etc.)	

Phase 2: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 3
Principal Question	What skills do you consider to be the most important for successful small business ownership (<i>successful in this instance being defined as solvent, profitable and having the potential to grow</i>)?	
Sub Question	N/A	
Rationale	To identify the key skills and competences which are perceived as being the most important to small business survival/success This will also allow the opinions of professional outsiders to be compared with the views held by the OMs surveyed	
Literature Based Precedents	The majority of OM skills are context specific (Gibb, 1987; Martin & Staines, 1994). Skills are often prioritised in accordance with industry/business type (Jennings & Beaver, 1997). Those situated within the service industry are likely to focus on 'people' skills and personal competences, whereas those operating in high-tech industries will concentrate on the development of technical skills (Martin & Staines, 1994).	
Comments		

Phase 2: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 4
Principal Question	What are the most common skill shortages amongst OM's of small firms'?	
Sub Question	i) Does ownership context affect this? If 'yes': ii) In what ways? If 'no': <i>Proceed to next question</i>	
Rationale	This will identify precisely where skill shortages lie and the most common areas of incompetence. It will also reveal any skill shortages that are typically present amongst those who have purchased existing enterprises.	
Literature Based Precedents	Small firm owners often lack skills in finance, marketing and human resource management (Scase & Goffee, 1987). The inability to manage the business will often doom it to failure, particularly with regards to new enterprises where ambition and enthusiasm frequently outweighs business and management skills (Huang & Brown, 1999).	
Comments	This question will also provide an indication of where support is most needed	

Phase 2: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 5
Principal Question	What action could OM's take to address their skill deficiencies?	
Sub Question	What is it about this approach that suggests it would be/is effective?	
Rationale	<p>This will identify which knowledge sources are likely to be the most effective in helping OM's develop the appropriate skills and competences.</p> <p>It will also show the reasoning behind the viewpoints held.</p>	
Literature Based Precedents	<p>Experiential learning accompanied by seminars and/or short courses are the most popular methods of developing OM skills (Henderson and Sutherland, 2000)</p> <p>Support and training is available through various small firm support networks, which provide a large array of facilities ranging from formal learning programmes to general business advice (Bennett & Robson, 2003)</p>	
Comments		

Phase 2: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 6
Principal Question	What type of training is/would be the most beneficial to small firm owners (<i>formal/informal; seminars, day release etc.</i>)	
Sub Question	Why is this?	
Rationale	This will determine which type of training would be the most beneficial and why (beneficial in this instance being defined as the type of training which generates the most learning)	
Literature Based Precedents	<p>OMs require prefer individualised training that can accommodate precise needs (Carrier, 1999). In formal training may be the only way of developing tacit skills (Abbott, 1993). The advantages of informal training include flexibility, cost-effectiveness and appropriateness (Curran et al., (1995). With regards to formal training, small firm owners tend to prefer seminars and short courses (Henderson and Sutherland, 2000) OMs tend to engage in short-term. information-orientated training (Watkins 1982).</p>	
Comments		

Phase 2: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 7
Principal Question	Should there be specialist support/training programmes for those taking over existing businesses?	
Sub Question	i) What type of support would be the most beneficial (help-lines, specialist training etc.)	
Rationale	<p>This will establish whether the uniqueness of small firm ownership within this context requires specialist support and/or training.</p> <p>It will also determine the strength of the perceived need for specialist support/training</p>	
Literature Based Precedents	<p>OMs need and prefer individualised training that takes into consideration the precise requirements of those concerned (Carrier, 1999). Single support schemes are often considered unsuitable as they do not take into consideration the fact that course content and time scales need to vary in accordance with the different types of participating businesses (Gibb, 1987). It may be virtually impossible to incorporate into training programmes those competences that are essentially context-bound (Martin & Staines, 1994; DTL, 1999a)</p> <p>Start-up schemes represent a separate and distinct grouping, which focus on the needs of those new to small business ownership (Gibb & Scott, 1985).</p> <p>Those taking over franchises may need to learn a great deal within a relatively short space of time (Paton, 2004).</p>	
Comments		

Phase 2: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 8
Principal Question	Are you familiar with any of the small firm support providers, (e.g. Business Link)?	
Sub Question	<p>If interviewee <i>is not</i> familiar: Why do you think this is?</p> <p>If interviewee <i>is</i> familiar Which organisations are you familiar with?</p>	
Rationale	This will provide an indication of which support providers (if any) are familiar to professionals who are directly involved with small firms (in this instance accountants).	
Literature Based Precedents	<p>The high levels of publicity Business Links receive suggests that awareness should grow quickly (Bennett & Robson, 1999b)</p> <p>For the past twenty years public sector support providers have suffered from low market penetration (Curran et al., 1996; Curran & Blackburn, 2000).</p>	
Comments	This question focuses specifically on the interviewees' knowledge of these organisations. How frequently their clients use these facilities is examined separately.	

Phase 2: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 9
Principal Question	Do your clients use public sector support at all?	
Sub Question	<p>If 'yes'</p> <p>i) Who are most likely to use these facilities –those involved with new enterprises or those operating established businesses?</p> <p>ii) (<i>In response to the above</i>) Why do you think this is?</p> <p>If 'no' Why do you think this is</p>	
Rationale	This will show how frequently the interviewees' clients use public sector support services and which type of firm (if any) is most likely to seek advice from this source.	
Literature Based Precedents	<p>There is a need for more innovative, sophisticated methods of intervention that will actively encourage the uptake of activities aspired to by government (PIU, 2001; HM Treasury, 2002).</p> <p>The majority of small firms in the UK are dissatisfied with government-sponsored initiatives (Wilks, 2000).</p> <p>The general scepticism of OMs brought about by their reluctance to participate in government initiatives, has resulted in poor take-up of the facilities on offer (Vickerstaff & Parker, 1995).</p>	
Comments	This question will also provide an indication of whether public sector support providers are capable of accommodating <i>all</i> small firms (start-ups, established businesses etc.) and/or whether this type of support generally perceived as being geared towards start-ups	

Phase 2: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 10
Principal Question	Do you feel that Small Firm Support Providers need to raise their profile?	
Sub Question	<p>If 'Yes: What would be the best way of doing this?</p> <p>If 'No': <i>Move on in the questioning</i></p>	
Rationale	This will determine whether support providers need to find more effective ways of encouraging small firms to use their facilities and how this might best be approached	
Literature Based Precedents	<p>A 1997 survey found that over ¾ of those polled were aware of Business Link (Fitchew & Blackburn, 1998). Analyses of Business Link awareness suggest that the majority of small firms are familiar with this particular support network (Bennett & Robson, 1999b). Many small firms miss out on public sector support because they are unaware of where their local office is situated (Daily Mail, 1997).</p>	
Comments	This question will also show whether public sector support providers should consider interacting more closely with other professionals who are involved with small firms (banks, accountants etc.) thus creating a larger and more varied support network.	

Phase 2: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 11
Principal Question	<p>What in your opinion are the main differences between start-ups and established firms that have experienced a change of ownership? (<i>Explain that the purpose of the question is to identify the positive/negative factors that are inherent within each</i>)</p> <p>NB If the interview is of the opinion that there are no major differences: <i>Move on to the next question</i></p>	
Sub Question	N/A	
Rationale	<p>This will reveal where these differences lie and why. It will also provide an indication of where assistance (i.e. support) is most needed.</p>	
Literature Based Precedents	<p>Start-ups represent a separate and distinct group (Gibb and Scott, 1985). It is more difficult to continually transform a business within a tumultuous environment than it is to begin from scratch (Drucker, 1970).</p>	
Comments		

Phase 2: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 12
Principal Question	Which type of firm (if any) is likely to be the most successful, start-ups or established enterprises that have experienced a change of ownership?	
Sub Question	<p>What do you think are the reasons for this?</p> <p>NB If the interview is of the opinion that neither is more successful than the other: <i>Move on to the next question</i></p>	
Rationale	This will reveal any distinct advantages/strengths that new firms/established firms appear to possess. It will also pinpoint any weaknesses and/or disadvantages that have the potential to affect the performance of these firms thus highlighting further areas where assistance/support may be needed.	
Literature Based Precedents	There is evidence that suggests established firms can become so entrenched in traditional methods of working that they begin to stagnate (Ward, 1987; Birley, 2002). New businesses may therefore have a distinct competitive edge over such firms due to their modernistic outlook and approach. If established firms are to gain the same advantage they may need specialist help and advice that will help them move away from these traditions and adopt a more contemporary stance (ibid).	
Comments	<p>Within the realms of small business research there is a great deal of material that examines factors that act as success/performance indicators within small firms generally (see for example Bird, 1992; Masalla, 1994; Morgan, 1996; Hynes, 1998; Hudson et al., 2000; Walker & Brown, 2004)</p> <p>However there is no documentation that examines performance/success indicators that may be unique to firm status (i.e. ownership context and the age of the business). This is clearly an important consideration as these characteristics are likely to spawn factors that may also act as performance/success indicators. For example when looking to assess business performance OMs of new enterprises are likely to take into consideration the amount of activity that takes place early on; an issue that would not apply to established firms as their stage of growth is more advanced.</p>	

OM Interviewees: Personal Details

Business Type	Ownership Status	Length of time Business Owned	Number of Employees	Age range of Owners
Tea rooms (Totnes)	Joint owner (spouse)	2 years	4	36-55
Tea rooms (Totnes)	Joint owner (spouse)	6years	3	36-55
Window cleaner (Totnes)	Sole owner	3 years	0	16-35
Flower shop (Totnes)	Joint owner (spouse)	9 years	2	36-55
Gift shop (Totnes)	Joint owners (friends)	18 months	3	36-55
Gift shop (craft) (Totnes)	Joint owners (spouse)	3 years	2	36-55
Café owner (Torbay)	Joint owners (spouse)	6 years	0	36-55
Skip hire (Torbay)	Sole owner	4 years	3	36-55
Pet shop (Torbay)	Sole owner	19 years	2	56+
Guest House (Torbay)	Joint owner (spouse)	3 years	4	36-55
Hotel (Torbay)	Joint owner (spouse)	12 months	25	56+
Hairdresser (Torbay)	Sole owner	2 years	1	16-35

PHASE 3: QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

(Follow-up interviews held with a cross-section of the OMs surveyed in Phase 1 of the research)

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To address specific issued raised by the survey (Phase 1)

Descriptor	Definition
Principal Question	This refers to the key question that commences a line of enquiry. It is based on a specific issue raised from the findings of the survey
Sub-Question	This is used to examine specific aspects of a subject and is directly related to the principal question. Some of the sub-questions may not apply to all the interviewees.
Link to Phase 1 of the research	This illustrates the link between the question that appears on the survey and the questions that are posed here. Occasionally a question is posed that was considered too broad to include on the survey
Justification	This shows the reasoning behind the posing of a specific question
Literature Based Precedents	This refers to an area of the literature that is directly linked to the principal question and the sub-questions that follow
Comments	This section provides any additional information that is considered relevant

Phase 3: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 1
Principal Question	What prompted you to buy a small business (<i>obtain further information after the question has been answered</i>)?	
Sub Question	What prompted you purchase this business in particular?	
Rationale	This will help identify factors that influenced the interviewee's decision to purchase an existing enterprise (rather than start their own business). It will also show the reasoning behind their choice of business type.	
Linkage to Phase 1 of the research	The survey asks respondents to indicate why they purchased their (current) business (Q1&Q2, q9)	
Literature Based Precedents	Independence and flexibility are the main attractions of self-employment (Ekos Research Associates, 1988; Dunn & Holz-Eakin, 1996; Uusitalo, 2001; Nettle, 2005). 'Push factors' such as unemployment do not have a significant influence on levels of self-employment (Moore & Mueller, 2002).	
Comments	If the interviewee has purchased a business within an industry where they have no experience, their learning needs will differ from those who have chosen to purchase a business within an industry that is familiar to them.	

Phase 3: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 2
Principal Question	<i>(For those who employ staff)</i> I notice that your business is staffed - were these people inherited or did you employ them?	
Sub Question	How did you find this? <i>(Wait for the interviewee to describe their experience(s) and direct the following questions accordingly. The focus should be on; the advantages of having staff that are familiar with the business, gaining acceptance, dealing with employees they dislike etc. [as specified by the interviewee])</i>	
Rationale	This will identify any key problems that interviewees have experienced within this area and whether existing employees are likely to be retained/dismissed. It will also reveal whether there is a need for specialist support that will help OM cope more effectively with the staff they have inherited.	
Linkage to Phase 1 of the research	Many of the OM's surveyed indicated that their businesses were staffed (Q1 & Q2, q5). As some of these employees may have been inherited (from the previous owners) the issues surrounding this need to be examined in order to determine whether working alongside existing of staff is likely to present difficulties, thus indicating a need for specialist support within this area.	
Literature Based Precedents	It is argued that there are significant differences between individual self-employment and self-employment with employees (Cowling et al. 2004) Small firm owners are often plagued with uncertainties when looking to find ways they can motivate staff (Scase & Goffee, 1987)	
Comments	This is an important issue as the inheritance of staff is one of the key characteristics that segregate business purchasers from those launching new enterprises. This question will also determine whether existing employees are likely to be rich source of learning. The inheritance of employees within this context is not well documented	

Phase 3: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 3
Principal Question	On the questionnaire you suggest that (<i>finance/managing staff/building customer relations etc.</i>) is extremely important/important to the effective running of a small firm – what are your reasons for this?	
Sub Question	You also indicated that (<i>skill x</i>) is not particularly important - why is that?	
Rationale	This will help explain why skills are prioritised in a certain way and whether ownership context appears to influence this. Establishing the reasons(s) why certain skills were given low ratings will also help determine whether the prioritisation of skills is linked to ownership context.	
Linkage to Phase 1 of the research	The questionnaire (Q2, q22) asks respondents to rate the importance of specific skills in relation to successful small firm ownership.	
Literature Based Precedents	The majority of OM skills are context specific (Gibb, 1987; Martin & Staines, 1994) Skills are often prioritised in accordance with industry/business type (Jennings & Beaver, 1997).	
Comments	Information regarding the level of importance attached to specific key skills was obtained from the questionnaire using a five point Likert scale.	

Phase 3: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 4
Principal Question	Do you make any business plans (<i>explain what is meant by this</i>)	
Sub Question	<p>If 'yes' i) What type of plans do you make? ii) In what ways do these help you?</p> <p>If 'no' Why is this</p>	
Rationale	This will show what type of plans interviewees are most likely to make (annual budgets, business objectives etc.) and which are perceived as being the most beneficial. Where no formal planning takes place the reason(s) for this can also be explored	
Linkage to Phase 1 of the research	This subject was considered too broad to include in the survey	
Literature Based Precedents	Small firms need to be aware of the importance of business planning (Chaston, 1992; Storey, 1994).	
Comments	This question will also help determine whether the type of plans made are influenced by ownership context	

Phase 3: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 5
Principal Question	I notice from the questionnaire that when you require advice you usually consult your accountant/bank manager/etc. What is it about him/her/them that induces you to use this source of advice the most?	
Sub Question	What are you most likely to consult him/her/them about?	
Rationale	This will identify the precise reasons for the choice cited. Although the findings generated by the survey suggest that accountants are the most frequently used source of advice, the reasons for this may nevertheless vary. This question will also help determine the type of problems that prompt small firm owners to seek advice.	
Linkage to Phase 1 of the research	The survey asks respondents to indicate which source of advice they use most frequently (Q1, q22, Q2, q23).	
Literature Based Precedents	<p>An OM's choice of advisor is largely dependent on the level of trust that exists between them (Bennett & Robson, 1999a; Mole, 2002).</p> <p>The principal source of advice is accountants, followed by lawyers, banks and professional business consultants (Storey 1994; Bennett & Robson, 1999b)</p> <p>Accountants are often considered by their clients to be an integral part of the business (Marriott & Marriott, 2000).</p>	
Comments		

Phase 3: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 6
Principal Question	What other sources of advice do you use or have you used in the past	
Sub Question	i) For what purpose did you consult him/her/them ii) How useful was the advice he/she/they offered	
Rationale	This will identify the sources of advice interviewees' use /have used in addition to the main source of advice cited on the questionnaire. It will also provide an indication of the type of advice sought and whether the advice offered is/was helpful	
Linkage to Phase 1 of the research	This issue was considered too broad in to include in the survey	
Literature Based Precedents	<p>Small firm owners regularly seek advice from a network of family and friends, although the specialist support that can be obtained from trade/professional associations also plays a major role (Bennett & Robson 1999b)</p> <p>Weighting the sample proportions to those of the size distribution of all British businesses suggests that 86% of all firms employing less than five hundred people (excluding sole-proprietors) used external advice between 1994 and 1997 (Bennett et al., 2000).</p> <p>The use of external advice appears to be on the increase, (Keeble & Nachum, 2001)</p>	
Comments		

Phase 3: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 7
Principal Question	Have you ever used public sector support services? (e.g. <i>Business Link</i>)	
Sub Question	<p>If this source <i>has</i> been used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) What did you consult them about? ii) How useful were they to you? <p>If this source <i>has not</i> been used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) What are your reasons for not using this particular source of advice? 	
Rationale	This will determine how frequently public sector support is used and how it is perceived (and why). It will also help identify areas that (in the interviewees opinion) could be improved and the possible impact such improvements may have. Discovering the reason(s) public sector support services were used will help identify the type of needs purchasers of small businesses are likely to have.	
Linkage to Phase 1 of the research	The findings generated by the questionnaire suggest that public sector support services are not amongst the most popular sources of advice (Q1, q22, Q2, q23). However as respondents were not asked to name any other sources of advice they use/have used, the level of uptake regarding public sector support services could not be established.	
Literature Based Precedents	<p>There is a great deal of evidence which suggests that less than 10% of businesses use public sector support (Cromie & Birley, 1994; Barclays, 1994; MORI, 1994; Doggett & Hepple, 1995: 31/MORI, 1996; Lloyds/SBRT, 1998)</p> <p>Government agencies have made a relatively small impact on small business clients compared to their private-sector counterparts (namely accountants) (Gooderham et al., 2004)</p>	
Comments	This question will also help determine whether specialist support should be available for those taking over existing establishments and the type of support most needed.	

Phase 3: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 8
Principal Question	(For those who underwent formal training) What prompted you to take formal training?	
Sub Question	i) What were reasons for taking technical training as opposed to management training? (<i>or vice versa depending on the type of training taken</i>) ii) What made you decide to take training before you purchased your business rather than after (<i>or vice versa depending on when the training was taken</i>)? iii) How beneficial was this training (<i>i.e. in what ways</i>)?	
Rationale	This will help establish the type of training (i.e. managerial or technical) that is considered most beneficial – and why. Looking at <i>when</i> training was taken (i.e. pre/post purchase) will provide an indication of the ideal time to pursue this type of activity	
Linkage to Phase 1 of the research	Respondents were asked whether any formal training was taken in conjunction with the purchase of their current business (Q 1 and 2, q.13,).	
Literature Based Precedents	When formal training is taken it is more likely to be technical than managerial (Barclays, 1994) Training will only be viewed in a positive light if its relevance to personal goals and aspirations is clearly apparent (Gagne, 1983; Noe, 1986) Training is more likely to occur before the owner becomes actively involved with business operations (Barclays, 1994; NatWest, 2000a)	
Comments	Informal training activities are discussed separately.	

Phase 3: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 9
Principal Question	<i>For those that have not undergone formal training</i> It was suggested (on the questionnaire) that the reason you decided not take formal training was because of (<i>time shortage/financial limitations etc.</i>) could you expand on this?	
Sub Question	Are there any other reasons, besides those we have discussed, that influenced your decision not to take training?	
Rationale	This looks to examine the ways in which time shortage, financial restrictions etc. affect training uptake. However the main reason for asking this question is to identify any underlying factors that may have contributed to the interviewee's decision not to train. If it can be established that personal reasons influence attitudes towards formal training, it may be necessary to alter the way this is presented.	
Linkage to Phase 1 of the research	The findings generated by the questionnaires showed that 80% of respondents had not taken training, although the reasons for this were varied (Q1 & Q2, q13.). The fact that approximately one fifth of those surveyed indicated that their decision was based on factors other than those listed (i.e. time shortage, financial restrictions etc.) suggests a need for further questioning	
Literature Based Precedents	Time shortage and/or limited resources can significantly affect the take-up of formal training (Marlow, 1992; Gibb, 1996; Henderson and Sutherland, 2000) The unwillingness to undertake formal training is often due to the inappropriateness of the programmes on offer (Deakins & Sparrow, 1991; Thomson & Gray, 1999; Huang & Brown, 1999) The small business fraternity often appears adverse to management education and/or training (Tait, 1990; Thomson & Gray, 1999; Devins & Johnson, 2003) For those whose education is limited there is often a reluctance to undertake <i>any</i> form of training, particularly that which involves group interaction as this has the potential to evoke embarrassment and/or self-consciousness (Thomas & Al-Maskati, 1997; Antonacopoulou, 2001) The majority of small firm owners are unfamiliar with the principles of formal training and all it entails (Handy, 1987).	
Comments	This question focuses specifically on the uptake of formal training. Informal training is examined separately	

Phase 3: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 10
Principal Question	Do you engage in any informal training activities? <i>(describe the concept of 'informal' if the interviewee is unsure of this)</i>	
Sub Question	i) How does this training benefit you as an OM? ii) How does it benefit the business?	
Rationale	This will identify any informal training strategies the interviewees' employ/have employed and the benefits that may be afforded by them.	
Linkage to Phase 1 of the research	The concept of this issue was considered too broad for inclusion on the questionnaire	
Literature Based Precedents	<p>Informal, on-the-job training is an extremely important aspect of learning in small firms Atkinson & Meager, 1994; Hendry et al, 1995)</p> <p>There is a the high frequency of informal training present within small firms (Curran et al., 1993; Abbott, 1993)</p> <p>Informal learning at the workplace increasingly forms an integral part of lifelong learning policies both at the European level and in most other countries (European Commission, 2001; OECD 2003).</p> <p>New strategies to improve organizational learning capacities increasingly favour experiential, informal and self-directed learning, which facilitates personal as well as organizational development (Dehnbostel and Dybowski, 2001).</p>	
Comments	This question will also help identify the most popular approach(es) to informal training.	

Phase 3: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 11
Principal Question	Did you work alongside the existing owner(s) prior to taking over the business?	
Sub Question	<p>If 'yes'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) For how long did you do this? ii) In what ways did it help you? <p>If 'no'</p> <p>Continue with the next question</p>	
Rationale	This will help establish how useful this is likely to be and where the main benefits lie. Identifying precisely what can be gained from working alongside existing owners will also indicate whether this should be actively encouraged in the future.	
Linkage to Phase 1 of the Research	This issue was considered to broad for inclusion on the questionnaire	
Literature Based Precedents	<p>Most OM learning is experiential (Rae & Carswell, 2000)</p> <p>The 'learning-by-doing' principle allows small firm owners to gain practical experience through problem solving, discovery and basic trial and error (Young & Sexton, 1997; Deakins & Freel, 1998).</p> <p>Acquiring knowledge through experience is an important aspect of <i>all</i> learning (Boud et al., 1993).</p> <p>Regular routine and the performance of habitual tasks are recognised as being key learning facilitators (Costello, 1996).</p>	
Comments	This issue is particularly important as it may help OMs become familiar with the business and its staff (where applicable). It will also act as a facilitator for the development of skills that are context-specific.	

Phase 3: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 12
Principal Question	Which source of learning is (or has been) the most beneficial to you?	
Sub Question	What is it about this particular source that made/makes it so helpful?	
Rationale	This will identify primary learning sources and the type of knowledge/information that may be yielded from them.	
Linkage to Phase 1 of the research	The findings from the survey suggest that most OM's consider themselves to be adequately or very adequately skilled in most of the disciplines listed. This question will therefore help identify the sources of learning that contributed most to the development of these skills and competences	
Literature Based Precedents	Accountants are an excellent source of learning (O'Farrell & Moffat, 1995; Gibb, 1997). OM's of small firms have access to a wide range of people and situations from whom they can learn. It is through the applied behaviour of such people that OM's are able to learn: copying, experimentation and opportunism being three prime examples (Gibb, 1997)	
Comments	It should be noted that the interviewees' perceptions of their skill levels might not be accurate.	

Phase 3: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 13
Principal Question	I notice that you feel there should be specialist support available for OM's (like yourself) who take over existing enterprises – what do you feel the main benefits would be if such facilities were made available?	
Sub Question	What <i>types</i> of support should be available (<i>specialist advice/specialist training/help-lines etc.</i>)?	
Rationale	This will help establish the benefits that may be afforded by specialist support and the type of support most needed. The feedback from interviewees will also assist with the design of a model that demonstrates how the needs of those taking over existing enterprises might best be supported and moreover, how the appropriate OM skills can be developed.	
Linkage to Phase 1 of the research	The questionnaire asks respondents to indicate whether there is a need for specialist training programmes (Q1, q23, Q2, 24).	
Literature Based Precedents	OMs need and prefer individualised training that takes into consideration the precise requirements of those concerned (Carrier, 1999). Single support schemes are often considered unsuitable because course content and time scales need to vary in accordance with the different types of participating businesses (Gibb 1987). It may be virtually impossible to incorporate into training programmes those competences that are essentially context-bound (Martin & Staines, 1994; DTI, 1999a) Start-up schemes represent a separate and distinct grouping, which focus on the needs of those new to small business ownership (Gibb & Scott, 1985).	
Comments	This question cannot determine to what extent these facilities would actually be used.	

Phase 3: Qualitative Data Collection		Question 14
Principal Question	With regards to the success of your business, what factors do you take into consideration when measuring this?	
Sub Question	More precisely, what makes you feel the business is successful	
Rationale	This will reveal precisely how the interviewees measure success and whether this is dependent on one key factor or a number of different factors. It will also show to what extent the firm's financial performance influences perceptions of success.	
Linkage to Phase 1 of the research	The questionnaire asks respondents to rate the success of their business (Q1 & Q2, q29,)	
Literature Based Precedents	<p>SMEs are more likely to focus on sales figures and income, than the information generated from management accounts, as is the practice in most large organisations (Masalla, 1994).</p> <p>Smaller enterprises need to take into consideration factors other than the financial health of the firm if they are to measure performance effectively (Hynes, 1998).</p> <p>The importance of non-financial measurements of performance is gradually being acknowledged and accepted (CIMA, 1993).</p> <p>Non-financial goals can lead to alternative measures of success, particularly in the small business sector (Walker & Brown, 2004)</p>	
Comments	It should be noted that although the aim here is to examine interviewee's perceptions of business success, they way they perceive themselves personally may also (albeit inadvertently) influence their answer to this question.	

OM INTERVIEWS

OM Interviewee No. 2

1) What prompted you to buy a small business?

i) What prompted you purchase this business in particular?

The interviewee considered himself (and his partner) too old for start-ups, as they are too risky (i.e. will it, won't it take off). They (the interviewee and his partner) had always wanted to run traditional tearooms but it had to be the right tearooms. They chose that particular business because it had potential that could be developed (i.e. it could be made to look more enticing to customers); the position was good (lots of passing trade) and it had plenty of well-established goodwill. Within ten days the interviewee (and his partner) had redecorated the tearooms (dining area) and changed the design of the soft furnishings (tablecloths, lampshades etc.). He stated that this had a significant impact on the overall appearance of the premises and that it was well received by the staff and customers.

Interviewee stated

'...When we saw this little café we just knew it could be a goldmine...it just needed a makeover... nothing too drastic...so we painted the walls...bought a few new pictures and changed the tablecloths. It may not sound like much but you wouldn't believe the difference...'

NB. These people are not interested in the growth potential of the firm, they just want to optimise the business and keep it at the size that it is.

(For those who employ staff)

2) I notice that your business is staffed - were these people inherited or did you employ them?

i) How did you find this (inheriting staff)?

The interviewee and his partner had inherited two employees and taken on one themselves. The existing employees were initially wary and unsure of what to expect. They clearly missed the previous owners. However working alongside the present owners (now the

previous owners) did much to alleviate the uncertainties and worries that these [existing] employees had. During this period the existing staff were also able to see that the new owners were not going to make any radical changes (i.e. staffing cuts, a reduction in working hours etc.). They warmed to the new owners relatively quickly after they knew they were 'safe'. Notably everyone worked well together during this period. After the business had been taken over and the interviewee (and his partner) were 'flying solo' the staff were helped the owners to become more familiar with the business - who was who (regular customers) and what was what ('...*how the whole thing worked*...'). The interviewee stated emphatically that had they not spent time working alongside the present owners, the situation with regards to the staff they had inherited would probably have been very difficult – everyone would have felt '*uncomfortable*'.

3) On the questionnaire you suggest that (in this instance) customer relations are extremely important/important to the effective running of a small firm – why is that?

- i) You also indicated that (Health and Safety/ Finance and Dealing with suppliers is not particularly important - why is that?**

The interviewee claimed that good customer relations are the key to a thriving business. '*If you have no customers, you have no business it is as simple as that...*' The ability to retain existing/regular customers ensures the preservation of the firm's goodwill. He believes that if these (the existing) customers are(still) happy they will '*...spread the word...*' This is what encourages new customers/business.

The interviewee reiterated what had been indicated on the questionnaire, namely that health and safety was not important to the success of the business. He suggested that once rules and procedures have been explained/demonstrated that's it. He did however admit that that they needed to be fully aware of the rules and regulations that applied to that particular business and that it is necessary to keep up with any changes/additions to existing legislation. He and his partner had enjoyed taking the (compulsory) course for their certificate in food hygiene but this was mainly because they were able to meet and speak with other people who owned similar establishments. The interviewee also

remarked that those starting new businesses had '*...their work cut out...*' making sure that they had covered every aspect of Health and Safety. He suggested that for some new businesses this would be '*an absolute nightmare...*'

The interviewee felt that finance is important to the smooth running of the business but not to its success. He suggested that small firm owners needed to be able to '*...pay the bills...*' and, hopefully make a profit [interviewee laughed, light-heartedly at the latter]. He also stated that if OMs keep accurate records of '*what comes in and what goes out...*' a good accountant would do the rest.

With regards to dealing with suppliers, the interviewee stated that if they are polite, reliable and friendly this is all that matters. He added that suppliers are sometimes good for the '*...odd bit of advice...*' but they are not essential to the firm's success.

4) Do you make any business plans?

- If 'yes' i) What type of plans do you make?
 ii) In what ways do these help you?

- If 'no' i) Why is this?

Explained to the interviewee that 'plans' referred to plans for the future of the business, budgets and cash-flow forecasts.

Having understood this concept the interviewee stated that only short-term plans are made – nothing '*...grand and fancy...*' In short, what they wanted to achieve in regards to the business and how to go about it were drawn up using rough lists in an exercise book. He claimed that long term planning could be fatal, as these types of plans almost always have to be changed. The interviewee was of the opinion that there is always something around the corner that '*...throws everything up in the air...*' Notably bank statements were used to keep track of finances as these provide all the information that they need to know. Cash-flow forecasts again comprised simple lists written in an exercise book. Interview stated

'These monthly statements show you exactly what's going on... you can see at a glance what you've got to work with... whether you need to be paying more money in ... or if you need to increase your overdraft'

NB Although the interviewee's approach to planning is informal it appears (?) to be effective - the interviewee and his partner have owned the business for six years and it is clearly extremely popular with the customers.

5) I notice from the questionnaire that when you require advice you usually consult your accountant/bank manager/etc. What is it about him/her/them that induces you to use this source of advice the most?

i) What are you most likely to consult him/her/them about?

The interviewee stated that his/their accountant was always '*the first port of call*' They have had the same accountant since they purchased the business 6 years ago and feel that they can consult him on '*...anything and everything...*' concerning the business. He suggested that he and his partner have learnt a great deal from this source particularly during the first couple of years. They are able to consult him on major and minor issues and on matters that are unrelated to finance/accountancy. The second time they consulted him, he spent half an hour teaching them simple bookkeeping. [Laughing], the interviewee claimed that his accountant feels that if small business owners had wanted to become accountants they would have chosen it as a career.

6) What other sources of advice do you use or have you used in the past?

- i) For what purpose did you consult him/her/them?**
- ii) How useful was the advice he/she/they offered?**

When advice is needed regarding money (loans, insurance etc.) advice/assistance is obtained from the bank or from their financial advisor (the latter to help them '*...get the best deal...*'). He claimed that when an expert is required and expert is consulted. They

often use the Citizens Advice Bureau, as the advice is free, reliable and, more importantly, up-to-date. According to the interviewee, these people will even put literature through the post (to arrive the next day) to ensure that people are provided with the information they need as soon as possible. This source of advice is particularly good with regards to legal issues and can often save the cost of consulting a solicitor.

The interviewee and his partner often consult the staff with regards to ideas/changes concerning the business, as these people can sometimes spot flaws that he and/or his partner have failed to notice. Ditto family and friends.

7) Have you ever used public sector support services? (e.g. *Business Link*)?

If this source *has* been used:

- i) What did you consult them about?
- ii) How useful were they to you?

If this source *has not* been used

- i) What are your reasons for not using this particular source of advice?

This interviewee has never used Business Link or any other public sector agency. This is because they have never had the need. He stated that they had heard from other OMs [of established businesses] that this particular source of advice is '*...more for those who are starting new businesses...*' From what he had heard, the government only offered help (courses etc.) to the long-term unemployed and suchlike who would not be able to start a business without government assistance.

(For those who underwent formal training)

8) What prompted you to take formal training?

- i) What were reasons for taking technical training as opposed to management training? *(or vice versa depending on the type of training taken)*
- ii) What made you decide to take training before you purchased your business rather than after *(or vice versa depending on when the training was taken)*?

iii) How beneficial was this training (i.e. in what ways)?

Neither the interviewee nor his partner had undertaken any formal training in conjunction with buying the business, notwithstanding the hygiene certificate, which was compulsory

For those that have not undergone formal training

9) It was suggested (on the questionnaire) that the reason you decided not take formal training was because of (time shortage/financial limitations etc.) could you expand on this?

i) Are there any other reasons, besides those we have discussed, that influenced your decision not to take training

The interviewee stated that he and his partner did not feel the need to take formal training as working alongside the present owners, prior to take over, taught them everything they needed to know in order to '*...continue where they [the present owners] had left off...*' He suggested that finding the time to attend training courses was impossible once they had taken over the business – (no way)! He also claimed that he doesn't feel comfortable in classroom situations, as he is '*...is not particularly academic...*' He further added that he hates the formality of this type of training and the way course leaders tend to put people '*...on the spot...*' His partner feels the same. He prefers to learn by doing [experientially] and feels that it is better to receive practical guidance from someone experienced (in this case the present owner) than be subjected to a lot of mumbo-jumbo from someone who has no practical experience [of the subject(s) they are talking about]. He also claimed that theory and practice are rarely the same and that the best way of learning a skill/job/task is to do it (!). He nevertheless admitted that formal training (either technical or managerial) was probably good for some people – but claimed that they would still need to gain practical experience before they could consider themselves 'able'.

10) Do you engage in any informal training activities?

- i) How does this training benefit you as an OM?**
- ii) How does it benefit the business?**

Having described the concept of informal training and given examples of what constitutes this type of activity, the interviewee stated that this type of training occurred frequently and often involved the staff. When asked to provide details he suggested that he and his partner often set themselves tasks in order to improve specific skills. Initially this concerned what could be described as technical skills, namely how to present food in a way that makes it attractive to the customer [one of his employees had shown them how this was done], how to dress the window, and how to carry trays in a more dignified manner (interviewee laughs at the fact that this is a form of 'training').

With regards to management skills, occasionally when they first took over the business, the interviewee and his partner would practice (using role play) dealing with hypothetical customer complaints. He stated that this was because they lacked confidence in this area and did not want to find themselves '*tongue tied*' if and when this type of situation arose. He also claimed that the present owners had set them various tasks [during the time that they worked with them] to help them master some of the skills there were necessary to run the business effectively. The interviewee suggested that this is the perfect way to '*... learn aspects of the business that you are unsure about or don't know...*' He added that although they were being shown what to do, they '*...weren't made to feel like numbskulls...*' When asked to explain this, he suggested that it was difficult to describe exactly but was comparable to being shown how to use a new lawn mower by a friend who owns and/or is familiar with that particular model.

11) Did you work alongside the existing owner(s) prior to taking over the business?

If 'yes'

- i) For how long did you do this?
- ii) In what ways did it help you?

If 'no'

Continue with the next question

As the interviewee stated earlier on in the interview he (and his partner) worked alongside the previous owner before taking over the business. This was for a period of three weeks on a full-time basis. He stated emphatically that they learnt so much '*... you wouldn't believe it...*' In addition to the informal training [described previously], they also learnt

how they might cope with the unexpected [discontinuous events] [the interviewee laughs at the memory of this]. The interviewee claimed that a great deal had been learnt by simply observing the present owners at work, in particular their approach to customers and how they 'came across'. Being able to ask the present owners specific questions as and when the need arose, helped them to prepare for the time when they would be working on their own [the expression on the interviewees face suggested that this can be a daunting prospect]. The interviewee then added that no amount of formal training could have taught them what they learnt during this period. He stated that he and his partner were '*...absolutely amazed ...*' at the amount that they had learnt in just three weeks. He then remarked on the confidence that it had given them (knowing that they had a good idea of what they were doing).

12) Which source of learning is (or has been) the most beneficial to you?

i) What is it about this particular source that made/makes it so helpful?

The interviewee was adamant that the richest source of learning was working alongside the present owners prior to taking over the business. In addition to the comments made above (Question 11) he suggested that everything that is learnt during this time is relevant and that '*...nothing you learn is wasted...*' He also claimed that working alongside the present owners provides a typical example of the difference between practice and theory. Although he could not compare the practical aspect of small firm ownership with any formal training taken [the interviewee and his partner had not taken any formal training] he nevertheless claimed that it was nothing like any of the books they had read about running a small business.

13) I notice that you feel there should be specialist support available for OMs (like yourself) who take over existing enterprises – what do you feel the main benefits would be if such facilities were made available?

i) What *types* of support should be available (*specialist advice/specialist training/help-lines etc.*)?

Despite not having taken any formal training the interviewee (and his partner) were of the opinion that there should be special training programmes available for those who take over small going-concerns. When asked why, he suggested that there are a number of issues that '*...people like us...*' face which can be difficult to deal with, typically inheriting staff, maintaining sales levels, preserving the goodwill of the firm [the interviewee defined this as being able to retain existing customers] and for those who had no experience of small business ownership [like themselves] *...the nuts and bolts of it all...* He suggested that this type of training should be in the form of a discussion group [focus group?], as this would enable individuals to pose specific questions and raise issues that concern them personally [i.e. issues that are situation-specific]. He then added that if this type of programme were available the courses would probably be very well attended as people wouldn't be put off by the fact that they are going to be faced with a typical classroom-teacher-pupil situation.

With regards to support provision he suggested that public sector agencies [which he referred to as government support] should employ advisors available who have an extensive knowledge of the issues that are likely to affect/concern those who purchase/take over small going-concerns. When asked to provide examples the interviewee suggested that the main areas that give cause for concern are inheriting staff, maintaining sales levels and holding on to the goodwill. In support of his argument he suggested that if trade started to fall and the goodwill began '*...to dwindle away...*' you could be facing serious trouble, [interviewee looks particularly grave at the prospect of this]. The interviewee then argued that everything seems to be geared towards new businesses and that support providers don't seem to realise that established firms are often sold to people who have no experience at all of running their own enterprise [raises his eyebrows in disbelief]. He then remarked that for those who were unable to (or did not wish to) spend time working alongside the present owners this type of support is essential [made this point emphatically]. He claimed that those who purchase small going-concerns should also be eligible for free/subsidised training and receive the same amount of help and encouragement as people who are trying to launch new businesses [stated that his partner holds the same view]

14) With regards to the success of your business, what factors do you take into consideration when measuring this?

i) More precisely, what makes you feel the business is successful?

The interviewee stated emphatically that the success of a business is almost wholly dependent on customer satisfaction [i.e. the quality of the goods/service provided]. He suggested that good relationships with customers enable you to obtain essential feedback concerning the products/services you provide [in his case this type of feedback was often used to make changes to items the menu]. He argued that large firms are unable to do this as they are not in position to '*...get close...*' to their customers. He claimed that satisfied customers also generate a great deal of new business. He then quoted the well-known phrase '*recommendation is the best form of advertising...*' Although the interviewee acknowledged that the firm's financial health was important, he was adamant that it is not as important as keeping customers happy, the argument being that so long as you are able to keep a tally [written] of what is going on [financially] your accountant will do the rest.

The interviewee (and his partner) believe the [their] business is very successful because the customers [new and existing] are happy [satisfied] and the tearooms are always busy! He argued that without these key elements no business could be described as being successful – '*...it is as simple as that...*' He concluded the interview by stating that provided business owners do not incur serious debts, having the ability to continually satisfy customers will ensure that the business not only survives but also generates a healthy profit.

NB This interviewee was very proud of his (and his partners) accomplishments over the past six years and volunteered evidence to support this (he invited me to inspect the books!). He provided a very clear picture of the difficulties small business purchasers face, the areas where support is most needed, key sources of learning and the skills that are important to those who purchase small going-concerns.

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